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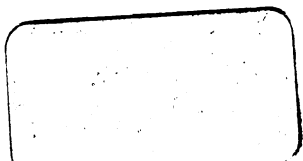
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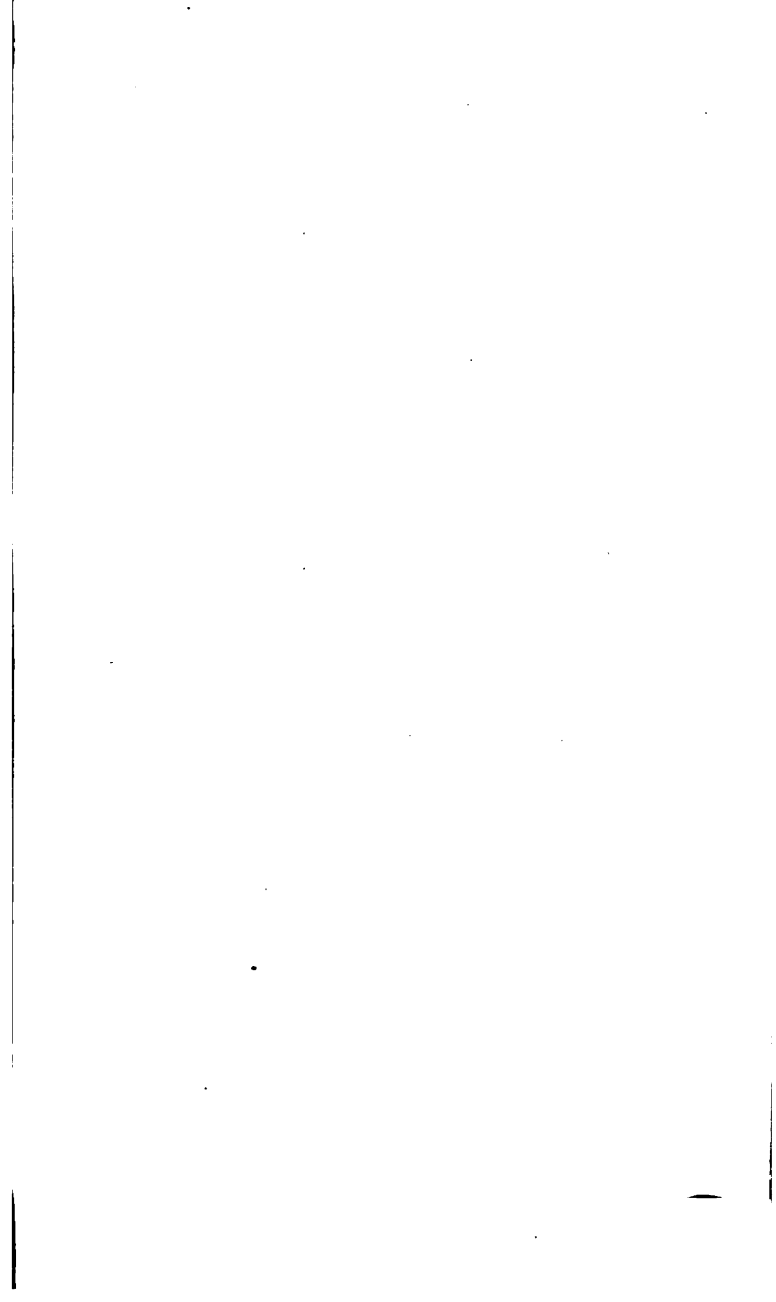
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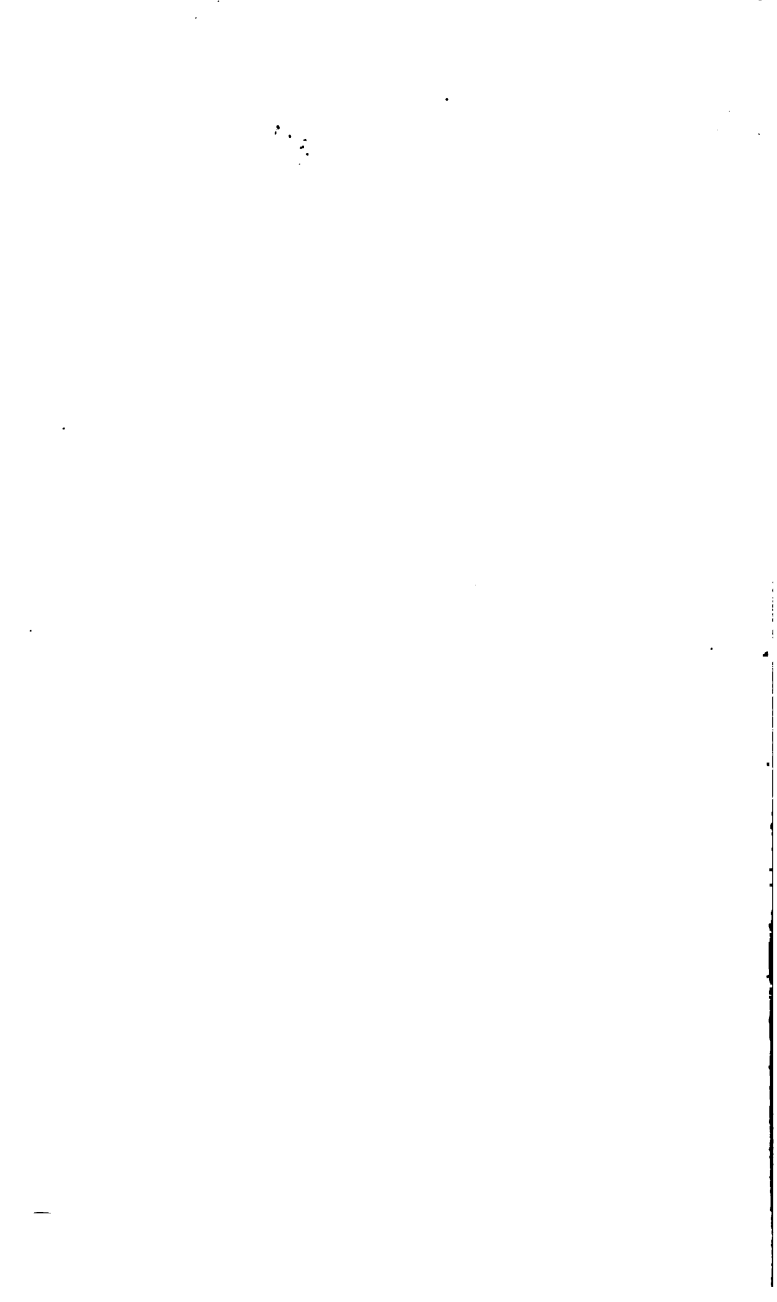
James Lennox.











MEMOIRS,

INCLUDING

LETTERS AND SELECT REMAINS

OF

JOHN URQUHART,

LATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREW'S.

BY WILLIAM ORME.

“ Multis ille bonis febilis occidit.”—HORAT. CARM.

——“ What though short thy date?

Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures,

The man of wisdom is the man of years.”—YOUNG.

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MEMOIRS
OF
JOHN URQUHART.

chap IV

THERE are few things which put the character and principles of a young man more to the test than a classical and university education. He who passes through this ordeal unhurt, has reason to bless the gracious and powerful influences of the Divine Spirit. I do not refer at present to the levity of youth and to the snares of those associations which belong to the state of society in colleges and classical schools. The danger of infection from the moral atmosphere is, indeed, great. But there are dangers of a different kind, arising out of the studies which chiefly engross the attention, and their powerful but unperceived influence upon the mind.

The investigations of philology and grammar, though important in themselves, and absolutely necessary as the basis of all correct knowledge, are dry, and often tiresome. The memory is loaded with words and forms of expression which tend no doubt, to exercise and strengthen it; but do not tend much to the moral benefit of the mind. When from these the scholar passes on to

the more elegant studies of the Greek and Roman classics, or even to the polite literature of our own country, how little does he find at all calculated to promote his spiritual welfare! This is not saying enough, how much does he meet with, the tendency of which is positively injurious! The fascinations thrown around vice, the halo of glory with which sin itself is frequently invested, cannot be viewed often, and with great intensity, without damage. The individual who gives his days and nights to the poets and orators of Greece and Rome, must be more than man if he escapes without hurt to his spiritual feelings and principles.

The influence of the exact sciences and of experimental philosophy, though of a different nature, is still hazardous to a mind which has not arrived at maturity. The absolute certainty of mathematical demonstration, and the sure results of algebraic formula, produce a habit which has proved in many instances very unfavourable to the due appreciation of moral evidence. And the processes of chemistry, and the experiments of physical science, have not been always productive of an increased veneration for the great Spirit who presides over, and pervades all the operations of the universe.

I wish to speak of results, rather than to assign reasons for those results. Whether the evils and dangers referred to are to be ascribed to the weakness and depravity of our nature, or to the imperfections of the systems of education which are generally adopted; or to both together, does

not alter the state of the fact that our youth cannot receive what is considered a finished education, without sustaining a very formidable trial. How few comparatively can pass through a college, or even a dissenting academy, to the work of the ministry, without experiencing a diminution, or a loss of their spiritual vigour.

To frame a system of education which would avoid the greater number, or most of these evils, would be a service of incalculable value to the world. But I doubt whether human wisdom, under existing circumstances, is competent to the task. It is no difficult matter to furnish expurgated editions of the classics, and to produce family Gibbons, and family Shakspeares; and those attempts at purifying the foul stream of classical instruction are not to be despised. But while so large a portion of time and thought must be expended in these pursuits, and while a capacity for relishing the beauties, whether of the ancient or the modern classics, is rated so high, I fear that the chief source of the evil will still remain.

The principle on which most systems of education are constructed, is the relation which certain attainments bear to certain temporal advantages. The problem on which they are all founded, is—How may an individual, at the least expense, be best fitted to conduct a family, to teach a congregation, to manage a counting-house, or to guide the state? I do not say these are not important questions; they are important, and they are the only questions which the world can ever ask and

determine. But surely there are other questions which christians might be expected to consider. Do not the relations which the pursuits and attainments of time bear to eternity, demand their consideration? Ought what can have little tendency to promote men's interests beyond this world,—what in many instances injures those interests,—to be the first subject of consideration? Is it quite impossible to frame a system of education in which all the lines may be brought to unite in forming the intellectual and moral powers of man, for a state of immortal enjoyment? A system in which every branch shall be deemed important, chiefly as it bears on his eternal condition? A system in which what is showy and superficial shall be rejected, or thrown into the shade; and what is substantial and useful placed in the fore-ground? A system in which taste shall be less an object than character, and intellect shall be made subservient to morals? A system in short, which shall have the principles of christianity for its basis, the advancement of christianity for its object, and the rewards of christianity for its end?

I do not conceive such a system to belong only to a region in Utopia. It is perfectly conceivable; but before it can be realized we must be furnished not only with new principles, but with new men to inculcate them, and with a different state of society to secure their operation. Many as are the evils which we still deplore, much progress has been made during the last thirty years; and before a similar period shall have passed away,

it is not too much to expect that the strides of society towards a better state will be still more gigantic.

I have been struck with observing the greater attention which is paid to the religious education of their youth, by the religious Roman Catholics of this country. Charles Butler, speaking of his education at Douay, and of the state of the other English Catholic schools on the continent, remarks, "They were excellently instructed in their religion; the classics were well taught, but the main object of them being to form members for the church, they were not calculated to qualify the scholars for business, the learned professions, or the higher scenes of life. But every care was taken to form the infant mind to religion and virtue; the boys were secluded from the world; every thing that could inflame the passions was kept at a distance; piety, somewhat of the ascetic nature was inculcated; and the hopes and fears which christianity presents, were incessantly held in their view. No classic author was put into their hands, from which every passage describing scenes of love or gallantry, or tending even in the remotest degree, to inspire them, had not been obliterated. How this was done may be seen by any person who will inspect Father Juvenci's excellent editions of Horace or Juvenal. Few works of English writers were permitted to be read; none which had not been similarly expurgated. The consequence was, that a foreign college was the abode of innocence, learning, and piety."*

* Butler's Reminiscences, vol. i. page 5.

Making every allowance for the partialities of system, and for early associations, there is much in this statement, from which the advocates of a purer system ought to take a hint. It is humbling to find a Roman Catholic representing the salvation of the soul as the main object of education, and of life; and Protestants speaking and acting in these matters, as if it were not an object at all, or at least one of a very inferior and subordinate importance.

"Fas est et ab hoste doceri."

As the present work may fall into the hands of some who are engaged in conducting our seminaries, I hope to be forgiven this seeming digression. Considering how many youth are seriously injured in the training; how many bitter regrets are afterwards experienced even by those who do not suffer permanent injury; and how few escape altogether without damage, I can scarcely be required to offer an apology for these remarks. Indeed, though the subject of these memoirs retained his integrity, and passed through his studies without blemish, I know from himself and his fellow-students, that "he retained," to use his own language, "a deep horror of St. Andrew's." He meant, I am sure, no reflection on the place, none on the professors, and none on his fellow-students. But he considered it marvellous that he had got through his academical course without ruin to his soul. In this preservation he was led to admire the exceeding riches of divine grace; but it must

appear very extraordinary that a christian university should expose its disciples to such hazards. The fact is, the profession is christian, but the entire process of education is pagan, or anti-christian. Religion, instead of being the first, the last, and the main object, is subordinate to every other object. The minds both of professors and students are absorbed in science and literature, as the chief objects of pursuit; and religion, when attended to, is examined rather as one of the sciences than as the doctrine of God, and the path of immortality. While this system is pursued, it is not wonderful that the atmosphere of colleges should generally be unfavourable to the vitality of christianity.

We have now

~~Our first volume~~ brought the subject of these memoirs to the conclusion of the third year of his university course, and the seventeenth of his age. To him it had had been a year of great interest and great exertion. In it he had acquired a large portion of celebrity among his associates; and what was more, he had laid the foundation of some of his most interesting plans of usefulness. We shall now endeavour to trace his spiritual and intellectual progress to the close of his short but useful life.

Returning home at the end of the session, after visiting Edinburgh, laden not with wealth but "with honours bravely won," he still appeared the same modest, unpretending youth. His mind was fully occupied with the importance of the christian

ministry, and especially with the necessities and claims of the heathen world. I had the opportunity of seeing a good deal of him during the month of June which I spent at Perth, and had then many conversations with him about his future plans. I saw the direction of his mind and was satisfied what would be the issue; but from his extreme youth, being then only seventeen, I urged upon him the necessity of taking more time to consider the subject, especially as his father and mother were both exceedingly averse to his going abroad. I advised him, as there were then some difficulties in the way of his returning to St. Andrew's, rather to apply to be received into some one of the dissenting academies at home; knowing that, if his mind still continued to be set upon the heathen world, the opportunity of gratifying his wishes would not be lost. With the advice he complied, and accordingly addressed a letter to the committee of Hoxton Academy, requesting to be received into that institution. His reasons for adopting this mode of procedure are well stated in the following letter to his friend Mr. C——

“ Perth, June, 1825.

A few days ago I sat down to write you, and wrote about eight pages which I thought, with the addition of a few sentences at present, would make out a pretty respectable epistle. A few days, however, often makes a great change in our

feelings and our prospects; and I perceive, on looking over the pages I have written, that they are quite unfit for sending at present. The last time I sat down, I wrote with the full expectation of soon enjoying again the company of my dear friends in St. Andrew's; and I write now under the impression that my lot may soon be cast in a distant part of the island. Mr. Adam, perhaps told you that Mr. Orme is here at present on a visit to us. He is a man with whom I have been on the most intimate terms from my very infancy, and one who has ever taken a deep interest both in my spiritual and temporal welfare. Since ever I have felt any thing of the power of religion, I have been accustomed to look up to him as my father in Christ; and have ever felt the most perfect confidence in making known to him all my designs and feelings. Last winter I wrote to him expressing my views respecting missions, and my thoughts of devoting myself to this department of the christian ministry. Since Mr. Orme's arrival in Scotland I have had much conversation with him on this subject, and have received a good deal of information respecting matters in the metropolis. There are some opportunities of instruction in oriental languages to be enjoyed at present in London, which if neglected now may be lost for ever. Dr. Morrison remains for *a year only*, to give directions about the study of Chinese; and Mr. Townley remains, it is not certain how long, to teach some of the more important of the Indian languages. Another session at one of the Scotch

universities, although it might be attended with several very considerable advantages, does not seem to counterbalance the opportunities I have hinted at. I can, in a letter, state the reasons which actuate me in this matter only in a very general way. It is not likely, should I go to London this summer, that I shall engage with the Missionary Society immediately, but rather that I shall enter one of our dissenting academies, where I shall be able to carry on my general studies at the same time that I have an opportunity of prosecuting the study of the eastern languages. On the whole, I feel in considerable perplexity how to act. I need not tell you that all my feelings are in favour of St. Andrew's, but I honestly think duty seems to point in another direction. Mr. Adam seems to agree in thinking it my duty to go to London. I have made this matter, for a considerable time, a subject of constant prayer; and I propose setting apart a day for the solemn consideration of the whole matter, and for the purpose of asking direction from on high. May I entreat an interest in your prayers? These are the circumstances in which we feel most the privilege of a free access to the Father of our spirits; and these are the times when our belief in the revealed declarations of his character and his will, come to be tried; and when, if that belief be found real, the revelation of God's character can give the greatest consolation and joy."

With his application the committee were much

pleased, and would have readily acceded to it; but he was rather too young to be received into the house, which was, besides, for that period already full. He was therefore requested to wait for a year, at the expiration of which they would be glad to hear from him again. In consequence of this failure he requested to be admitted into the Glasgow Academy under the tuition of my respected friends, the Rev. Greville Ewing and the Rev. Dr. Wardlaw. After some hesitation on the part of the committee of that institution, on the ground of his having devoted himself to foreign service, they agreed to receive him. But circumstances changed a little, and it appeared desirable that he should return to St. Andrew's to complete his academical course.

How his mind was exercised in regard to these things will, in part, appear from some of his letters:—

“ Perth, July 8, 1825.

My very dear friend,

An opportunity is afforded me, by Mr. Machray, of answering your interesting letter, which I am glad to embrace. After you left us, I had a good deal of conversation with my friends on the subject of my destination; and, having set apart a day for the solemn consideration of the matter and imploring divine direction, I came to the resolution of making application at Hoxton Academy. The issue of that application determines

me to remain another year in Scotland. I received an answer from Mr. Wilson this week, informing me that the vacancies were all filled for the ensuing session; but that if I could profitably employ my time for a year, they would have room next year and better accommodation, as they expect to enter on their new college. In connexion with this matter, I have been led to consider more attentively those passages of Scripture which refer to missionary exertions, and the result has been a deeper impression than ever of the duty of engaging in this work. It is very true that much has to be done at home; that there are many here, as my friend Craik writes, who 'can only be considered in the light of more criminal heathens.' But this is a wilful ignorance: they are not 'perishing for lack of knowledge.' And this argument, if carried to its full extent, would stifle missionary exertions to the very end of the world. What would have been the consequence, had the apostles resolved not to leave Jerusalem till every one of their brethren according to the flesh, was truly converted? The Gentiles would not have received the glad tidings of salvation at the present hour. This was not the commandment the apostles received, however; and accordingly, they acted in a very different manner. They were to preach the gospel to all nations, *beginning* at Jerusalem. The nation of the Jews had a claim upon the first preachers of christianity, which our countrymen have not upon us. They were not only their 'brethren according to

the flesh,' but they were also God's chosen nation ; and as such, it was right that they should enjoy a pre-eminence over all others, in first receiving the proclamation of pardon. But, how did their brethren, the apostles, act even to this favoured nation? They made a full declaration of salvation through Christ;—they made a free tender of the mercy of Jehovah; but by almost all, this mercy was slighted and rejected. By thus sinning against greater light, these individuals became *more criminal* even than the heathen. Did the apostles, therefore, think that they should not go forth to the heathen, till all these rejecters of the truth were convinced of the error of their ways? No; that very rejection of the gospel by their countrymen, was a signal for their departure.— ' Seeing ye *reject*, &c. behold we turn to the Gentiles.' Had the gospel been proclaimed in like manner to *all* other nations, the apostles would have felt it their duty to have laboured assiduously among their brethren at home. But while there remained a single nation on the face of the earth, that had not received the knowledge of salvation, they felt that the parting commandment of their Master was not yet fully obeyed; and while they lived they made it their business, more and more fully to execute that command. But their missionary spirit died with them; and at the present hour that commandment remains still unobeyed. Is it difficult, in this case, to see the path of duty? Besides, I cannot see that by preaching at home we are hastening the coming

glory of the church. God has promised that all shall *know* him. He has not promised that all shall *serve* him. On the contrary, he has said, that He will *gather* his people out of every nation, kindred, and tongue, and people; which evidently implies, that *all* shall *not* be his people. Far be it from me to depreciate the work of the ministry at home. It is a most important work. But still, while there are any sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, it must yield in importance to the missionary field. Besides, who can tell what an effect our neglect of God's commandment, to preach to *all* nations, may have in causing him to withhold his Spirit from the exertions of christians at home? I must abruptly conclude. I was struck with the variety of incident in your last. Let us contemplate much, my dear friend, the grand operations of God to our world; and let us thus learn to feel our own insignificance, and to merge every selfish consideration in the great work to which we are called."

The progress of his religious sentiments and feelings, the following letters will show.

The first, is the letter alluded to in that to his friend C——, already inserted. It is too valuable to be omitted.

"My very dear friend,

The receipt, of your interesting communication, and of a note from my friend Mr. Tait, accom-

panying a *Treatise on Confessions of Faith*, have been among the most remarkable events in my history since I wrote last;—they have, at least, been almost the only varieties that have broken the regularity and sameness of a ceaseless routine of occupations, repeated with little change or interruption, day after day. Not that I am displeased, or wearied of my retirement, for I esteem it as a very great privilege. But I preface my letter thus, merely to remind you that though you who are a public character, and are surrounded by all the bustle and variety of numerous avocations, have such a body of interesting matter to communicate that you pant for utterance in the expression of it;—and one subject leading to another—the stream of information so enlarges as you go along, that the very sheets of paper seem to have foreseen its rising magnitude; and aware of what was coming, to have extended their dimensions in proportion as the fund of your information increased. I say, though this be the case with you, you must remember that it is very different with a solitary recluse, who has no companions but his books (with most of whom you are better acquainted than himself) and scarcely any engagements but his private studies. But a truce to this trifling, I must proceed to answer your very interesting letter. We may sometimes draw illustrations of spiritual things from the most ordinary occurrences in life; and they are not on that account, the less striking. Your feelings expressed in the beginning of your letter, with respect to

your correspondence, struck me as a good illustration of the nature and operation of *faith*. You knew something of the character of a fellow-creature, as much, you thought, as to entitle you to rely upon his veracity. You knew, however, that he was fallible, and subject to change; and yet, on this previous knowledge of his character you confidently expected the fulfilment of a promise he had made to you. The time of its fulfilment came, however, and it seemed to you to have been broken. You were 'perplexed to account for his silence.' You tried to account for it by some expressions of regret he had used; that he had made the engagement; but you did not think this a sufficient explanation of his failing to perform it. Now, what was it that made you think, even in the face of existing circumstances, that your friend might have performed his promise? It was your faith in his veracity, founded on the previous manifestations of his character which you had observed. Now let us compare this; or rather, let us contrast it with our faith in the promises of God. Instead of an imperfect guessing at his character, from displays of it which might generally correspond with what we think its leading characteristics but which sometimes speak in direct opposition to them, all the manifestations of the divine character we have ever beheld have been in perfect harmony with each other: all going to establish the grand truths, that 'the Lord is good;' that 'the Judge of all the earth will do rightly;' and, above all, to demonstrate almost from the very nature of the

divine existence, that 'with Him there is no variability or shadow of turning;'—that He is a God who *cannot* lie. Now is it not very strange that with these so sure grounds for implicit confidence, our faith in the divine goodness and faithfulness is so weak as to permit our being perplexed by any of the dispensations of his providence, however dark and discouraging?—You will remark, that this very perplexity is an indication of a *certain degree* of faith; it is a struggling between our confidence in the individual, and the circumstances around us which seem to impeach his character. If this circumstantial proof be very strong, then the perplexity indicates a *very strong degree* of confidence, to enable us to resist the conviction of this strong circumstantial proof. But though in these circumstances, perplexity does indicate a *very strong* degree of faith; yet it at the same time indicates an imperfection of faith. It may require very strong faith to stand in the combat against a very strong enemy: but perfect confidence would do more,—it would overthrow the enemy,—it would gain the victory. But perplexity implies that this is not the case. It implies suspense. It implies that we have not come to a decision. It implies that the combat is yet doubtful; that the victory has not yet been gained. Now is it not strange that our faith in a creature, weak as are the grounds of it, should carry us so far? and that strong as are the foundations of our confidence in God, it does not carry us

farther?—that the one should carry us so far as to land us in perplexity; that the other should not carry us so far as to extricate us from perplexity? O my friend, were we but deeply impressed with a sense of God's all-sufficiency, how much of our unhappiness would be taken away! There would be no murmuring at the dispensations of providence;—there would be no regret on reflecting on the past, but the regret that we had ever departed from God;—there would be no fear, on looking forward to the future, but the fear lest we might again break his commandments. Sin itself, from which we can never be wholly freed in this world, would still remain to trouble us; but all those sources of misery which indirectly spring from it, would be removed. And, by a continual dependence on God and confidence in him, the power even of sin itself would be continually weakening within us. The firm belief that God was working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, would encourage us to work out with fear and trembling, that part of our salvation which yet remains, even our deliverance from the power of sin. Connected with this subject, that is a striking passage, 'Walk thou before *me*, and be thou *perfect*.'

But I am awakened from this long reverie, by perceiving that it is near our dinner hour. I sat down in despondency, thinking I should find nothing to say; and resolved by way of making matter, to write a commentary on your epistle. I

believe I shall make out pretty well in respect of quantity, if I paraphrase the whole of it at as great length as I have done these first few sentences."

"Perth, ———"

My dear F——,

I take the liberty of writing these few lines, in answer to yours. We were glad to hear of your safe arrival, but were sorry to see the same depression spread over your letter which we had formerly lamented to behold in yourself. You do not say any thing particular about the state of your health; we trust, however, that the change of place, and the bustle and excitement of travelling may have (partly at least) removed your nervousness. Circumstances, indeed, seem to be very depressing. But we, my dear ———, have consolations that should bear us up, and even make us glad under the severest calamities. That climax of misfortune so beautifully described by the prophet in the verses, 'Though the fig-tree shall not blossom,' &c. has not yet by any means come upon us; and shall our hearts refuse to join in his triumphant expression of gladness, 'Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation?' We have a still surer word of prophecy than that which he was instrumental in delivering. We have a surer light to guide our footsteps, and brighter promises to cheer us on our journey. And shall we repine, when all is comparatively

smooth and even before us? When we see our way before us, and can perceive no difficulty to oppose our progress, we do not need to call into exercise our trust in the promises of God;—we do not walk by faith, but by sight. But it is where our way is dark, and there seems to be a lion in the path, that we feel our weakness. It is then that our faith in His promise is put to the test, who hath said, ‘Lo, I am with you alway.’ Is it not strange, that we can believe such promises of support and succour as are written on every page of the Bible, and ever feel discouraged or perplexed? Such a belief, were it perfect, would transform even this world, with all its trials and afflictions, into heaven. Such a faith, however, is unattainable, while we are wedded to a body of corruption and exposed to the malicious suggestions of the adversary. But though this faith cannot be altogether attained, yet it may be approached to; of which we have some most triumphant proofs in the history of the people of God. But I must stop short.”

“ *Perth, July,—.*

My dear C——,

It now seems, I think, determined, that I may yet entertain the hope of spending another winter with my dear friends in St. Andrew's; and, as matters have turned out, I feel almost sorry that I did not confine within my own breast, those painful feelings which the prospect of parting

naturally excites. Had the matter been determined otherwise, however, it might have seemed unfriendly and self-willed to have asked no aid in the decision of it from the counsels and the prayers of my christian friends. As it is, the decision is not mine, but has chiefly been determined by circumstances over which I had no controul; but which have I trust, been graciously ordered by Him who is the God of providence, and who has promised that *all* things shall work together for our good, if we put our trust in him. In considering what might be the path of duty in this matter, I was a good deal perplexed. Had I not thought at all of engaging in the work of missions, I should not have doubted that I ought to finish my course at St. Andrew's before entering a theological academy. And on the other hand, had I come to the determination of devoting myself to that work, (especially with the views I have of China as a field of labour,) I should not have hesitated to present my services to the Missionary Society, at present, and thus avail myself of the advantage of personal intercourse with Dr. Morrison. Neither of these was the case however. It is now about a year since I thought seriously of personally labouring in the foreign department of the christian ministry; and although at a more advanced period of life twelve months' consideration and prayer might seem sufficient for determining a question even of this importance; yet you will perceive that my extreme youth altogether alters the case. If my wish to preach the gospel of

Christ among the heathen, have in it aught of the romance of a boyish imagination, a few years' thought and experience will extinguish its ardour; but, if the Lord has appointed me to declare his name to the Gentiles, and that wish has been implanted in my breast by the Spirit of God, delays and disappointments will but foster its growth, and make it yet more vigorous. For these reasons I could not feel it my duty to make a direct application to the Missionary Society, to study in London under their superintendence. But, on the other hand, the facilities of acquiring oriental languages which the metropolis presents at present, and which are very uncertain in their continuance, make me anxious to be in London, if possible. After considering the matter in all these points of view, consulting my friends here, and asking counsel and direction from the Most High, it seemed to me my duty to make application to Hoxton Academy, which is intended chiefly for the home department, but which sometimes also receives missionary students. This step, you see, had it been taken, would have given me all the advantages I could wish from an immediate residence in the capital, and yet have left my future destination still a matter of consideration and prayer. The letter I received from the secretary of the Hoxton committee, in answer to my application, satisfies me as to the duty of remaining another year in Scotland. Had I not made this application, I might have looked back with regret on the opportunities I had neglected; but as it is,

my conscience is satisfied in having done what I thought my duty; and those feelings are also gratified which I had to struggle with, in the performance of that duty. Excuse me, my dear friend, for having dwelt so long on this subject. I am sorry that I have spent so much time that I have little remaining to answer your very interesting and affecting letter."

" Perth, September, 1825.

My dear friend,

I do not know whether debts of kindness, like other debts, admit of being regularly summed up in a debtor and creditor column, and balanced against each other. If so, though you confessed the balance due to me in your last, I fear your punctuality and my negligence have more than reversed the matter, and I am now much deeper in your debt than ever you have been in mine. I will not attempt to offer apologies. I might, I believe, conscientiously spin out some that would appear feasible; but I am always suspicious of the sincerity of a man's sorrow who expresses great contrition for a fault he has committed which, at the same time, he labours with all his might to extenuate by every trifling excuse that can, or scarcely can be alleged for it.—I have been negligent;—you will forgive me;—and there the matter must rest. I was much struck with the spirit of earnest affection and fervent piety that pervaded your last; and the account you give of the em-

ployment of your leisure hours sufficiently explains the greater vividness of your spiritual affections. There is a beautiful action and reaction of our religious feelings and actions on each other;—grace, shown to us by God, prompts us to deeds of charity to our fellow men; and these deeds, all-imperfect, and even displeasing to God, as they must be in themselves from the sin that mingles with the purest of them, are again rewarded by a fresh supply of the favour of our God, which must again lead to deeds of yet more extended benevolence, which are again to meet with a richer reward from the inexhaustible resources of Almighty Goodness. It is thus that he who waters others is watered himself; and of such an individual John Bunyan's paradoxical lines are strikingly true:

‘A man there was, though some did count him mad,
The more he cast away, the more he had.’

I say not these things to flatter you. Even where the richest rewards are given for the most indefatigable labours of love, we must ever remember that no reward is deserved, and the individual should be ready to exclaim, with him who was instant in season and out of season in the duties of his office, and who was conscious that his labours were more abundant than those of any of his brethren,—‘Yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.’ I thank you for your very kind admonitions on my weakness of faith. It has much to struggle with in a heart that is but very par-

tially renewed; I fear very much that unsanctified confidence which is the most fearful temptation with which the adversary can assail us;—a confidence that sin cannot damp;—a confidence that, in some cases, the approach of death itself will not destroy, but which will lead its possessor to the very gate of heaven, and will only be dispelled when the fearful response is given,—‘I never knew you, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity.’ Then he who has been deceived by its delusive whispers of ‘peace, peace, when there was no peace,’ shall exclaim in the very paroxysm of astonishment and despair, ‘The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved!’ The consideration of such a case as this, should make ‘us examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith.’ It is true that if we look to ourselves for comfort, we shall never obtain it; but it is equally true that if the gospel is not to us the spring of holiness as well as the source of our comfort,—‘we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.’ We must not dread the discovery that we have been making little progress, or even that we have been pursuing a retrograde motion in the christian course; nor must we smother every emotion of insecurity and danger that may rise on such a review. True, we must not cherish such emotions and rest in them till they lead us to despair. They must lead us anew to the blood of sprinkling. That which gave consolation when all we could look back upon was an

unbroken course of rebellion, will give consolation still; and it is only by such a process, I conceive, that true comfort can be obtained."

During the summer months, besides teaching a Sabbath-evening school in the neighbourhood of Perth, and keeping his meeting with the young men once a week for conversation on the Scriptures, he diligently pursued his studies and a course of reading. From some memoranda among his papers, I find that he kept a regular account of every day's employment. It commences on the twelfth of May, on which day he arrived at his father's. It then lays down the following plan of study and occupation for the future:—"To rise at seven o'clock; Greek Testament till eight; walk till nine; breakfast between nine and ten; Hebrew Psalms till eleven; mathematics till twelve; French till one; Greek till two; English reading till three; dinner, three to four; Latin, four to six; tea, six to seven. Walk, &c."

At the end of September is the following summary of his occupations for the preceding months:—"Greek Testament, Matthew to the Epistle to the Romans. Revised 184 pages of Hebrew Grammar. Read 40 verses of Hebrew Psalms. Revised six books of Euclid's Elements; 120 pages of Bridge's Algebra. Wrote one essay and fifteen letters. Read 72 Lectures of Brown's Philosophy; Baxter's Saints' Rest; Gilbert's Life of Williams; Edwards on Religious Affections; Narrative of a Tour to the Grande Chartreuse;

Horne's Letters on Missions; Orme's Letter to Irving; fourteen Miscellaneous Discourses."

It is evident, from this statement, that he did not pass his time idly or unprofitably. It does not however contain the whole of his employments. Besides what is mentioned above, it appears from the daily entries, that he read several of the Orations of Cicero; considerable portions of Homer, Thucydides, &c. He besides met with several interruptions which repeatedly engrossed most of his time for a number of days together.

The following excellent letter he wrote to his friend Craik, shortly before he went to London:

"Barossa Place, September 3, 1825.

My very dear friend,

I am astonished to find on looking to the date of your last, that it is so long since I received it; and, probably, if you have been expecting a letter, the time that has seemed to me like a few hours, may have been felt by you as if longer than it actually is. At least, so I feel. I always think my friends are very long in answering my letters, and yet I find that, even when I conceive myself most punctual, I am more dilatory than any of my correspondents. That is an apt personification of Time which represents him as a decrepit old man with wings that are visible only from behind. While we watch his approach he seems to creep tardily along: it is not till he has passed us that we

perceive he has been *flying*. I cannot tell you how much I felt on the receipt of your very splendid and very affectionate present. It has turned so common, from the higher refinement of our day, in the acknowledgment of the most common-place favour for an individual to allege that he cannot express his gratitude, that I am almost ashamed to use the much-hackneyed phrase. But, in my case, it is used in simple honesty; and I know you will believe me when I say so. The word 'memorial,' in the inscription, which of course struck my eye before reading your letter, affected me a good deal. I feared it was prophetic of separation, and looked anxiously over your letter for the passage which should tell me that you had got an appointment to some situation which would prevent our meeting in St. Andrew's next winter. I was agreeably relieved from my anxiety by finding in your first page, instead of an account of your fancied removal, a proposal of lodging in the same house with me. And I was pleased to think that, by calling your present a 'memorial' of our friendship, you meant, perhaps, to remind me of the fleeting nature of our intercourse; which soon,—it may be very soon,—will exist only in the recollection of the past.

My alternations of feeling somewhat resembled those of one who, on returning after a long absence to the land of his nativity, should ask some passer-by, in pointing to a sepulchral pile before them, Whose monument that was which seemed to have been so lately erected? and should be

answered by the mention of the name of one whom he remembered as one of the dearest companions of his youth, and in whose company he had yet hoped again to revive the recollection of joys that had long departed,—a feeling, in some respects, more pleasing even than the joys themselves: but whose informer, on perceiving the gloom that had overcast his countenance, should rejoin,—not to think that he was dead,—he was still alive for whom that monument was intended,—he had built it,—not like many who in life-time raise a splendid mausoleum for their dust, as if to demonstrate that infatuated man can be proud even of his frailty;—but to stimulate him to greater diligence in the improvement of a season in which so much has to be done, which, at its longest, is so very short, and which, even were it longer, is so very uncertain.—But whither am I wandering? Excuse a mind that is sometimes too fond of amplifying trifles. I would scarcely write in such a motley strain to any but yourself. If, however, Cowper published a moral poem on ‘The Sofa,’ I may be excused for moralizing in a private letter, on the word ‘memorial.’

* * * * *

Most of Newton's Letters I have read,—and those I read with very great pleasure. And, though not perhaps after this particular author, that I remember, yet frequently, after perusing such authors, have I shared in the feelings you express,—a fear that the spirit that animated such men is fast declining. Often have I asked

myself the question, Is not christianity the same now as it was in the days of Owen and Baxter, and Newton, and why then is it that we now so seldom meet with 'living epistles of Christ,' such as they were? If we do not observe this lukewarmness, the world will: If we do not use it as an incitement to greater fervency of prayer for the reviving influences of the Divine Spirit,—infidels will make their use of it, in drawing from it arguments against the power of religion. I have often thought that I perceived arguments against evangelical religion, far stronger than its opposers have ever adduced; and I have wondered how they could escape the notice of such acute men as we have often had to mourn over among the 'enemies of the cross of Christ.' I think it is the pious Newton of whom we have just been speaking, who thinks he perceives in this, the watching of a gracious providence lest the mind of a weak believer should be shaken by the corroboration of those arguments from another, which must often have appeared fearfully alarming in his own experience. Were the opposers of evangelical truth, instead of their worn-out vocabulary of opprobrious epithets, to employ fair arguments from the inconsistency of christians, many of us would be struck dumb. If 'our treasure be in heaven, our heart will be there also.' And if our heart be there, since it is 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,' our conversation will be about heavenly things. How different, however, is the case! On

this subject there are two or three very beautiful verses which I have just read, in a collection of hymns by Thomas Kelly, (I know very little about the author, the volume I quote them from belongs to a sister of Robert Trail,) in which, although there be no great strength of conception or beauty of imagery, there are contained some strains of lively piety and christian feeling, expressed in very simple language. Such, I think, are these verses, paraphrased from, or rather suggested by Malachi iii. 16, 'Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another,' &c.

' Why should believers when they meet,
Not speak of Christ, the king they own ;
Who gives them hope that they shall sit
With him for ever on his throne ?

Is any other name so great
As His who bore the sinner's load ?
Is any subject half so sweet,
So various, as the love of God ?

'Tis this that charms reluctant man,
That makes his opposition cease ;
Beholding Love's amazing plan,
He drops his arms, and sues for peace.

'Twas so with us, we once were foes,
Were foes to Him who gave us breath
But He whose mercy freely flows,
Has saved us from eternal death.

We look with hope to that great day,
When Jesus will with clouds appear ;
A sight of Him will well repay
Our labours and our sorrows here.

Of Him then let us speak and sing,
Whose glory we expect to share ;
In heaven we shall behold our King,
And yield a nobler tribute there.'

I cannot help mentioning that I last week received a letter from our friend Mr. T——, very richly imbued with christian feeling. Political economy and even church establishments, were fairly cast in the shade; and there was an earnestness of affection and warmth of feeling manifested while writing on the grand subjects of our common faith and expatiating on the endearments of christian friendship, of which you would scarcely believe our phlegmatic friend susceptible; and with which, only *such* subjects could inspire him.

The account Mr. T. gives of the employment of his leisure hours, sufficiently explains (to me at least) this increased spirituality of his mind. He has been for some time, paying daily visits to 'the house of mourning.' Two of the people he has been accustomed to visit, have died during the summer; of none of them he thinks he had hope in their death."

In the month of September he went to London, on a visit to his friend Mr. Adam; in the course of which he spent a few days with me—the last of my earthly intercourse with him. The following extract of a letter from Mr. Adam to me, notices the visit and some of the objects which occupied his attention during the following winter, after his return to St. Andrew's.

"At the close of the session he persuaded me before leaving for England, to spend a short time

with his friends at Perth, which I did; and before returning again the following winter, I persuaded him to pay me a visit in return, at Homerton. During this visit he was introduced to Dr. Morrison and Mr. Townley, and openly expressed the wish he had fostered previously in his bosom, to devote himself to missionary labours. We returned to college together, and being linked by a new bond, a common desire to benefit the heathen, we applied ourselves afresh to our general studies and to a thorough investigation of every thing relating to missions. For this purpose we searched the sacred Scriptures, and summed up our inquiries under the heads of *precepts, prophecies, examples, and promises*. We also perused Brown's History of Missions; Horne's, Ward's, Milne's, and Judson's Letters; the Lives of Martyn, (whose he read repeatedly, and eagerly drank into his spirit,) Brainerd, and Chamberlain; Ward's History of the Hindoos, &c. During this winter our society flourished, and several essays were read not only by ourselves but by others, some of whom we believed to be inquiring after the path of duty; and, as I perceived, were not a little influenced by the powerful and affecting manner in which John pleaded the claims of the heathen. With a sedulous attention to his engagements at the college, he found time to visit the sick; to give his assistance at some little meetings formed for the religious instruction of the poor during the week; and occasionally to supply some

village stations where there was preaching on a Sunday. I had forgotten to say, at the beginning of this session he laboured diligently for a time at Chinese, and actually accomplished by his unaided endeavours, a translation of the first chapter of St. John's Gospel. Attention to so many different objects rendered it absolutely necessary that he should relinquish the least pressing, and consequently, as I believe, he laid it by, and never afterwards resumed it."

In a letter to his father, from London, he gives some account of his visit, and of his future plans. It contains also some remarks on my respected friend Dr. Morrison, which are so just that I cannot keep them back. I believe the character and demeanour of that devoted individual have not been properly understood, and in some quarters have been treated with a degree of unintentional injustice. His long and retired residence in a far distant country, and his absorption in the great object which he has so ardently and successfully pursued, sufficiently account for certain marked peculiarities which I am convinced had no foundation in any obliquity of temper or disposition. Justice to one of the most enlightened and devoted servants of Christ which this or any age has furnished, requires that I should bear this testimony while I introduce the observations of my young friend.

"Marshgate, Homerton, Oct. 20, 1825.

My dear father,

In company with Mr. A. I called on Dr. Morrison a few days after my arrival, who received us with that bluntness by which his manners are characterised, which has by some been represented as approaching to rudeness; but which is evidently not the want of kindness but a superiority to those petty expressions of it which are often used in our too refined age, as a covering for coldness and indifference. Neither did I find in Dr. Morrison, as some of our friends had represented to me, an overweening conceit of his own sphere of exertion. What he said of missions had more in it of calm rationality and less of enthusiasm than I should have even expected from a man who had spent seventeen years in a heathen country. Dr. Morrison very kindly offered to introduce me to his students at the Missionary Society's rooms in Austin-friars where the doctor attends three days in the week, to give instructions in Chinese. I have attended there with a few exceptions, every day since my arrival, and have seen as much of the mode of studying the language as may enable me, should I wish to pursue it, to do so alone. Dr. Morrison has offered me a loan of the books that are requisite, which are very expensive, (the Dictionary alone having been published at thirteen guineas;) and has also made me a present of a small work which he has just published, entitled the Chinese Miscellany. With

these helps, I hope to do something at the language this winter, in St. Andrew's, and should I never make any actual use of it, it will be a good mental exercise. I have not yet called on Mr. Wilson, but intend to do so before I leave; but I think it likely that with my present views, my case does not come within the province of any of the home theological academies. My plan is, to return to St. Andrew's, to devote the winter to my ordinary studies; give a little time to Chinese; and more especially, along with my dear friend John Adam, to consider very seriously those passages of Scripture which relate to missionary exertion, as well as to collect from other sources all the information possible upon this interesting subject; and to pray more earnestly than I have yet done, for direction in this particular matter. I thus hope, by the conclusion of the winter, so far to have made up my mind as may enable me either to offer my services to the Missionary Society, or to apply for admission to some dissenting academy. May the Lord direct me! I think you may perceive that my visit to this place has not been to no purpose. There is much general information that I have obtained, which the narrow limits of a single letter do not permit me to communicate; and much more which is of such a nature that it is not very easy to communicate by writing at all; and, on account of which chiefly, a personal visit seemed advisable."

* * * * *


Dr. Morrison generously presented him with his Dictionary; and the papers which he left behind sufficiently evince how ardently he entered into the study of that difficult language. He appears to have mastered some of its peculiarities; to have committed a number of its radicals to memory; and to have translated, as Mr. Adam states, the whole of the first chapter of John.

It was during this session that Dr. Chalmers committed to his charge the Sabbath-evening school which met in his own house; and I am sure it will not give offence to that respected individual, to find a record in these pages of the gratitude and affection of his late pupil, for the attentions which were so kindly shown him.

“ St. Andrew's, December 6, 1825.

My dear father,

Things are going on this session remarkably well. We miss many of our companions of last winter, some of whom were among the most active supporters of whatever was good or excellent; but their places have been in part made up, and we hope may be so more fully, when some who seem well disposed but are yet little known at college, may have stepped more decidedly forward. I need not tell you that I find in William Alexander, a much more congenial associate than in my quondam fellow-lodger. I am glad to find him very decided in his religious sentiments and practice, although he has not yet joined himself to



any christian society. He has begun a Sabbath school here, and seems to engage in this and other such employments, with great earnestness and zeal. I trust he will be very useful to us in our exertions for the glory of God and the best interests of our fellows.)

The first general meeting of our University Missionary Society was held yesterday. This institution seems now, under the blessing of God, to have weathered all the opposition that threatened at first to crush it, and promises fair to be established on a secure basis, and to extend the field of its usefulness. The dignitaries of our college profess to have quite changed their opinion with regard to it. Dr. Nicol confesses that the Reports we sent him gave him information that was quite new to him. Last year we were refused a room in the college and could scarcely obtain a place of meeting in the town; now Dr. Haldane tells us that the Divinity-hall is at our service, or any other place which his influence can command. This offer we did not accept, as we had already obtained the old episcopal chapel as a place of meeting which is more comfortable and convenient for our purpose than any other place we could obtain. Our two principals have not given us fair words merely, but have testified their sincerity by sending us a donation of a guinea each, with the promise of more on the part of Dr. Nicol. These are triumphs which the most sanguine advocates of the cause would, a few years ago, have thought it not only ridiculous

to expect but almost foolish even to wish for. With God, however, all things are possible; and it is because we expect so little, and desire so little, and pray for so little on the faith of his promises, that these promises are not more speedily and more triumphantly accomplished.

I think I mentioned in my letter to my mother, that I had engaged to teach Dr. Chalmers's Sabbath school during the winter: my school at Denino, in consequence, is left destitute. I have heard that the children are desirous that it should be begun again. Mr. Adam has commenced his operations, and I have been giving him some assistance. I think it advisable, with my present prospects, that I should engage rather more prominently in such employments than otherwise I would be inclined to do.

Dr. Chalmers has been more than kind to me this year: indeed I feel almost oppressed by his attention. As my school is held in his house, I generally sup with him on Sunday evening, when I enjoy much more of his conversation than at set parties, as he and Mrs. Chalmers are then generally alone. I was very much gratified by a walk I had with Dr. Chalmers, to visit the parents of the children who attend his school. The people in some of the houses seemed to recognize him familiarly, so that he is probably often engaged in the same labours of love. He thinks such exercises as visiting the poor and the sick, the best introduction to ministerial labour. 'This,' he said as we were going along, 'is what I call

preaching the gospel to every creature; that cannot be done by setting yourself up in a pulpit as a centre of attraction, but by going forth and making aggressive movements upon the community, and by preaching from house to house.' I mention these remarks more freely, as I think this is a duty by far too much neglected among our dissenting ministers."

The Sabbath school which he engaged to teach this winter in the house of his respected professor, from whom he experienced invariable kindness, appears to have occupied his attention very closely. In a book, now before me, is contained a list of the names of young persons with their places of residence. A list of tracts then follows, which belonged to the school library, with Dr. Chalmers's remarks on the character of each. Then a list of tracts and small books, read by himself, with his own account of their nature and tendency. He has also written out very fully, some of the school exercises on the Scriptures, which do great credit to his knowledge of the Scriptures, and to his tact for communicating that knowledge.

This winter he entered the natural philosophy class; and likewise attended the Hebrew class. In this language he had before made considerable progress, by the help of some Hebrew books which I had put into his hands. He likewise, as appears from his papers, studied hard at Chinese for some time; and only gave it up from the greater urgency of some other objects.

His mind was now completely absorbed in the contemplation of future missionary labour; and to this object all his pursuits became subservient. The letter of his friend Adam shows how much he studied it. The paper book containing the arrangement of the plan of investigating the subject remains; and it contains many extracts from the Scriptures and from various books, on the subject of missions, with numerous references, which prove how very fully he had examined the matter. It would be very desirable indeed, if those who offer themselves for this service were found generally to possess such a knowledge of the work which they profess to undertake. Almost all his letters and papers, from this time, bear upon this subject, and display at once the depth of his piety, the ardour of his zeal, and the large portion of good sense with which he contemplated the service of Christ.

Desirous of obtaining advice, and of engaging the prayers of his friends on his behalf, he applied to those in whose judgment and piety he placed confidence, to assist him. The following is a letter of this kind.

“ My dear and much respected friend,

It is now about eleven o'clock on Sunday evening, and I have been engaged almost the whole of the day in public exercises, so that you will be disposed to excuse a hurried letter. I write these lines chiefly to renew my request that you would favour me with your correspondence

on a subject which now most deeply engages my attention,—The determination of the sphere of labour in which I can most usefully spend my life if the Lord spare me, and honour me to do the work of an evangelist. I do not know whether there be any impropriety in my making this request; if there be, you must lay it to the account of my ignorance, and forgive me. Were I soliciting your advice merely for the sake of promoting my own interest, I should feel that my request was stamped with a character of very gross egotism. But I feel that I am the property of Christ and of his church; and that even my feeble services may have some influence on his cause; and in this view of the subject, you will not think me selfish in desiring your attention to what might at first appear my own private affairs. Almost every person I have conversed with on the matter, urges upon me the duty of attending to the wants of our own country, and assuredly if our own country were more neglected, or even as much neglected as other lands, I should feel the argument in all its force. I do think that our own countrymen have the first claim on our attention, and I am inclined to think that the first preachers of christianity would have declared the message of mercy first to the Jews, even though no express command had been given to preach to all nations, *beginning* at Jerusalem. But I cannot see how the claims of a native land can be stronger to a Gentile, than the claims of their own favoured nation was to the Jewish christians. On this ac-

count, I think we are quite safe in taking the apostles for our example in their conduct towards their countrymen. They did not wait till every dark corner of Judea was fully evangelized; far less till every heart had been savingly impressed by the truth. It was no argument to them to remain in Judea, that there were many who heard their message that after all had refused to receive it. On the contrary, this was the very signal for their departure. (Acts xiii. 46. xxviii. 24—29.) I do feel much for the dark places of our own beloved country; but it does seem to me that the evangelical ministers of Britain could, with very little effort, publish the gospel most fully to every individual in the land. And they would do well to examine how far they are not guilty of the blood of souls in not making more vigorous exertions for the heathen around their own doors. If a pastor of a church cannot do the work of an evangelist, let a separate person be maintained by every body of christians, for this purpose; or, if each church cannot accomplish this, let a number of churches join in order to do so. I am aware that this is partly done in the itinerant societies which are now beginning their operations, and I rejoice to see it; but still this is but a very feeble effort, compared with the necessities of the case. I still am inclined to think that the publication of the gospel as a message of mercy to sinners, is the grand object for which the christian ministry was instituted; at least it is one of the greatest objects. I do think that even the edification of the body of

Christ yields to it in point of importance. We believe that if a sinner once embraces the gospel he cannot finally fall away; and even if his progress in the divine life should be slow, we know that in a very few years at the farthest, a full display of the glories of the divine character must burst upon him. Now, whether is it a more important work, to rescue a sinner from hell and place him in this condition of safety; or to antedate in a very slight degree, the happiness of a future state, in one who has believed? For, all our advances in the knowledge of divine truth here must be held insignificant, when compared with the immense addition to our knowledge and our happiness which we shall receive at that time when the dim conceptions of faith shall be exchanged for the bright realities of actual vision. I beg that you would not understand me as estimating lightly the work of grace in the hearts of believers. It is only when contrasted with the work of regeneration, that I would ever think of it as of secondary importance. But I am not sure that the work of grace would go on more slowly in the hearts of believers, from the attention of the pastors being more called to the work of evangelizing the heathen. I do think in the present day we are apt to trust too much to public ordinances, and I would almost like to see christians more thrown upon the resources of private devotion, and more direct communion with God. Our knowledge of divine things, to be sure, is small; but oh, that our piety were but equal to our knowledge! I am sorry to be obliged to conclude so abruptly."

His correspondent wrote him an excellent letter in reply to this, which produced another from him, which I subjoin.

“ St. Andrew’s, February 4, 1826.

My dear friend,

I feel much encouraged by your very kind letter. However clear the way of duty may seem to be marked out by our own conscience, still it gives us a much surer confidence in our own convictions when they are strengthened by the concurring sentiments of our christian friends, especially of those friends whom we highly esteem. I am not sorry on the whole, that hitherto my friends have all opposed my desire to preach Christ among the heathen. Perhaps it is well that we should have to wade through a good deal of opposition, in making up our mind on a subject of such importance. There is an air of romance which invests the subject of missionary adventure when first it is presented to the mind of the young disciple; (what Mr. Malan, in writing to my friend Mr. Adam calls ‘un trait de l’imagination;’) and it is well, perhaps, that this false fire should be damped by opposition. It is a principle, I believe, among the Moravians, ‘never to persuade any person to be a missionary.’ And perhaps we should still act in the spirit of this maxim, did we even carry it so far as rather to repress than to stimulate the incipient zeal of the candidate for missionary service. For surely if our desire

for the work cannot stand against the remonstrances of our friends, we have every reason to think that it would soon be quenched amid the heavy and lengthened discouragements which must be met with in the work itself. If the desire to serve my Saviour among the heathen were merely *of myself*, it is not like the fickleness of my natural disposition to have persevered in it till now, while meeting with so little encouragement. I do trust that the Spirit of the Lord has implanted this desire in my breast, and I know that He will perfect what he has begun. You speak of the difficulties connected with the work of a missionary. I can assure you, my dear friend, that as I have perused the history of former labourers, they have thickened upon my view. It is not to the natural dangers and hardships of the missionary life that I refer. It is not the prospect of encountering the diseases of an insalubrious atmosphere with a frame that is not very robust, which affects me. If we perish in such a cause we perish gloriously, and in this respect we 'conquer though we are slain.' There is something sweet in the contemplation of suffering for Christ's sake. 'If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.' And 'the more we toil and suffer here, the sweeter rest will be.' These are not the difficulties that I fear. But, I confess, I do tremble when I think of the spiritual dangers,—the temptations of a heathen land, where all those barriers are broken down which are the *only* safe-guards of the boasted virtue of the

great mass of our community; and which operate perhaps more strongly than he is aware, in restraining those evil propensities and worldly lusts with which even the christian has to contend. I have been very much depressed to find the instances of apostacy among missionaries so very numerous; and that some who for a long time did run well, were afterwards hindered by the lust of the flesh, or the lust of the eye, or the pride of life. While I look at this dark side of the picture, there is nothing gives me any comfort but a complete reliance on the faithfulness of Him who has promised that as our day is, so shall our strength be. Oh, for a stronger faith in my Redeemer! a closer walk with my God! I see that *spirituality of mind* is the *main* qualification for the work of a missionary, and this is the very qualification which I feel that I most want. But I believe that He who hath given the desire to serve him, will also give the ability to fulfil that desire. I know that though weak in myself I am strong in him. And I will rest in the promises of his love. Christ when he dwells in the heart by faith, can impart of his own omnipotence to weakness itself; for through him, (may the weakest christian say) I can do all things. I have been struck with the view you give of the pastoral office, as raising up labourers. It is a view of it which I had not sufficiently considered. When we look intently at one object it is very probable that other most interesting objects may altogether escape our notice; and so when the mind is much

occupied with the consideration of a single object; the very intensity of our attention to it may be the means of obscuring our perception of other objects equally important. Dr. Chalmers has of late plied me a good deal with the same kind of argument for remaining in this country. 'You may render even to the cause of missions,' he says, 'perhaps greater service in raising up labourers by your preaching here.' My reply to this, however, is just a reference to facts. Christianity has been long preached and many converts have been made in our land, and the cause of christian philanthropy moreover, has been most ably pleaded; but notwithstanding, when labourers are called for, the eloquent advocates of missions shrink back, and scarce any are found to go forth."

Among his papers I find the notes of a speech which he delivered at a missionary meeting at Cupar of Fife, on a Monday evening in the month of February. It was written late on the Sabbath night preceding, and early on the Monday morning. He walked to Cupar, delivered his address, and returned early the next morning to St. Andrew's. It is full of ardour, and replete with christian feeling, though perhaps he carries some of his views a little too far. I should have given it in this place, as well deserving of insertion; but being somewhat similar to an address afterwards delivered at St. Andrew's on the same subject, I omit it to make room for other matter. Such an address by one so young, could not fail to produce

a very powerful effect. I pray that those who read it may feel it equally with those who heard it.

Much as John's mind was engaged with foreign objects he did not forget those who had a claim upon him at home. His own family and a few particular friends were the objects of his warmest attachments; and for the salvation of some of them he laboured faithfully with themselves and wrestled mightily with God. I venture to give the following to his brother, as a specimen of combined fidelity and tenderness of rare occurrence. There is also in that letter, and in the one which follows to his mother, a manifestation of that exquisite sensibility which characterised him, and which made his devotion to the work of a missionary no ordinary sacrifice. The prospect of leaving his country and his father's house, was to him one of inexpressible anguish; but the consideration of what was due to the authority and glory of Christ impelled him forward. With talents not inferior to those of Martyn, he had feelings no less powerful than those of that devoted missionary; and though he was not honoured to follow him in his glorious career, yet as having it in his heart, I doubt not he now inherits with him a portion of his reward.

“St. Andrew's, February 10, 1825.

My very dear brother,

I have long thought of writing to you; and indeed, had a letter half finished a week or two

ago. I have at last been able to get a day nearly clear of engagements, and I am glad to spend it in making up a packet of letters for my friends in Perth. I begin with you; and as I wish, if possible, to get five or six letters written, you will excuse me if I am more brief than otherwise I should be in writing to an *only* brother. I have often wished, my dear David, to have some closer intercourse with you than I have yet had on religious subjects, either by conversation or by letter. The latter method is the only one in my power at present; and in some respects, I think it the most advantageous, as we can express our sentiments both more deliberately and more freely than we perhaps could in personal intercourse. I hope you will not think me obtrusive in bringing this subject before you. Believing, as I do, that not only a right understanding of the gospel but also a real belief of its truths is necessary to our happiness either here or in that mysterious state which is, after death, you cannot surely wonder that I should be anxious to know the feelings of my dearest friends in regard to this important subject. We, my dear brother, have enjoyed very distinguished privileges in having a knowledge of the gospel from our infancy. But, although early religious instruction is a most inestimable blessing it has also its disadvantages. We who know the gospel, and whose early prejudices (the strongest of all prejudices) are in favour of the gospel, are very apt to rest in our knowledge, or in our attachment to certain religious opinions,

as a proof of our faith, and consequently of a state of safety in regard to another world. Now I think it is of the very greatest importance to remember that there can be no *belief* where there is no *feeling*. In the ordinary affairs of life we are disposed at once to admit, that a man cannot believe any thing without being suitably impressed by it. And how then should we be for a moment deluded into the opinion, that in this one instance where the truths are calculated to make the very deepest impression;—in this, and in this alone, these truths can be believed without being felt? Would you think me censorious if I should say, I feared *you* were not a christian? Would you not be quite startled if I said, I suspected *you* to be an infidel? I do not mean, my dear David, to make either of these assertions, far less to do so in a spirit of censoriousness. But I will confess to you that I have an uncertainty on the matter which fills me with the greatest concern on your account. We start at the name of *infidel*. And we are very apt to think that a man may be *unregenerate* and yet very far removed from any thing like infidelity. We are very apt to think that there may be such a thing as a half-christian, one who is almost a christian. But it is silly to be deluded by mere names. The Bible tells us that ‘he who *believeth* shall be saved, and he who *believeth not*, shall be condemned.’ We are told of no transition state in another world,—half-way between heaven and hell, or nearer the one than the other.—No; we must either rise to incon-

ceivable glory, or sink into unutterable woe. The grand question is, *Do we believe the gospel, or do we not?* This, and this alone, fixes our after state. If we believe, we shall reign with saints and angels; if we do not believe,—if we have hesitated whether we should receive the gospel or not,—if we have been even *almost persuaded* to believe,—and if, moreover, we have been possessed of all the knowledge and even all the graces that can adorn an unregenerate character; still, notwithstanding all, if matters stop here, we must be condemned throughout eternity, to herd with the very outcasts of society,—with blasphemers and atheists,—with liars and murderers. This is a very fearful view of the matter, but is it not the view which the Scriptures present? And it is this view of the matter that leads me to fear, and even (I acknowledge) to suspect, that my own brother may be among the number of those who are securely, and even cheerfully walking on to the pit of endless perdition. This is an awful thought, and I have felt its awfulness. Often have I wept from the bitterness of the thought, that we may soon part never to meet again: and excepting the prayers I have offered for my *own* forgiveness, the most earnest petitions I have ever presented at the throne of mercy have been those I have put up for a *brother's salvation*. I believe there is an efficacy in prayer; and I am not without the hope that these prayers will be answered. I have sometimes thought that I could see that you had a conviction that all was not right with you;—

that after all, there was a something in christianity which you had not experienced: I could remember that such was the state of my own mind, when the Spirit of God first strove with my rebellious heart, and the hope dawned upon me that this might be the beginning of his working on your mind. That hope has often been blasted by your indifference, or your open rebellion against God; but, though often blasted, I will still continue to cherish it. The Lord grant that it may be realized! I have written these lines for your own private perusal; and therefore I have laid aside that veil of propriety by which in ordinary life, we are accustomed to conceal our feelings, and I have laid open my heart before you. I do not think you have the hardness to laugh at my concern on your account; but if even this should be the effect of this letter, still I shall not regret that I have told you all I feel. This letter has been preceded and accompanied with prayer; and part of it has been written in tears. God is sometimes pleased to work by the most insignificant agents; and I am not without the hope that by the blessing of his Spirit, these confused expressions of a brother's heart-felt desire for your salvation may be made the means of softening your heart, and leading you to receive the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ with humility and with joy.

There is one circumstance, my dear brother, that has especially led me to open my heart before you at present, and to urge thus solemnly and earnestly upon you the acceptance of the gospel.

You have heard, probably, that I have determined to spend my life in preaching to the heathen. I feel that even the innocent pleasures of this life are all of them unsatisfactory; and in many instances, tend to draw the mind from heavenly objects. And, from all the information I can collect, I am convinced that I can serve my God more effectually by declaring his name where it never has been declared before, than by repeating the gospel to those who have often heard, and as often refused it. But the thought that I am soon to leave this land *never to return*, makes me feel it a more urgent duty while I remain, to press the truths of the gospel on the attention of those who are my countrymen; and especially to warn most solemnly, and most earnestly to persuade, those who are dearest to me by the ties of nature. *A few months*, my brother, and our earthly intercourse must be for ever at an end. Shall I hope to meet you in heaven? O give me an answer to this question,—for on yourself its answer depends. I confess that, in the prospect of leaving my parents, one half of the great burden that lies upon my mind would be removed, could I confidently rely on the religious principles of my sister, and especially of yourself who, in a short time, will be their *only son*, and almost their only earthly protector. There are occurrences that must here present themselves to your mind, which you must know wound my feelings most deeply in the prospect of separation;—but these I will not call to mind. O that the God of the families of

Israel may cause his peace to abide upon my father's house !

You know that my parents feel deeply at the thought of my departure. I am sure that if they could feel a thorough confidence in you, my brother, it would go far to reconcile them to what I believe to be the will of God concerning me. I know, my dear David, that you are often placed in difficult circumstances; but a belief of the gospel and a spirit of prayer will go far to enable you to act calmly and meekly under the most trying circumstances. Believe in Jesus Christ, and look to him; and in looking to him, you will reflect his image; you will become like him. Thus, and thus alone, will you learn like him, when you are reviled, not to revile again; and even when you suffer, not to threaten.

You see, my brother, I have many reasons for urging upon you these solemn warnings and earnest entreaties. I beseech you to believe in Christ. I beseech you to take his yoke upon you, and learn of him, for 'his yoke is easy, and his burden is light.' I beseech you to learn of him to be meek and lowly. I intreat you to do these things, if you would save your own soul; if you would fulfil the best and most earnest wishes of an affectionate and only brother; if you would, in some degree, alleviate the sorrow of one who is soon to part with all he holds dear on earth; and finally, if you would comfort our bereaved parents, if you would make up the breach which the resistless hand of death has so lately made,

and which the imperious calls of duty soon must make again, in that little family which I must try to think no longer my home."

"St. Andrews, February 14, 1826.

My dear mother,

My work of letter writing has taken up nearly all my private time for two days ; and I still feel that there are some who may be expecting to hear from me, to whom it will be quite impossible for me to write. Although I have written to my father, (which I always think the same as writing to you,) yet I cannot think of letting my parcel go without sending a few lines expressly to yourself. All my friends seem doubly dear to me since I have thought of parting with them. There was nothing in the prospect of a separation, my dear mother, that gave me greater pain than the thought of wounding your feelings ; and accordingly, in my late visit, I was very much rejoiced to see you speak so calmly and resignedly on the subject. Even in this life God has promised to restore a hundred-fold any thing we give up for his sake. And I do think that even these trials in themselves carry a blessing along with them. The prospect of an early separation from all I hold dear on earth,—bitter as the thought is,—has, notwithstanding, proved to me a real blessing. I have felt an inexpressible dreariness in looking forward while I think only of the things that are seen and temporal. But then, the very dreariness which

seems to hang over my earthly prospects, has led me to look more earnestly to heaven as my home and the place of my rest. And if we can but steadily fix the eye of faith on the heavenly inheritance, the glory of the promised land will shed a brightness even over the gloomiest part of this valley of tears. I know, my dear mother, that you have many trials; and I could wish much to sooth the declining years of that dear friend who watched over my helpless infancy. I would like to be able to make some return for the anxious hours and the sleepless nights I have cost you. This I may never have in my power; but wherever my lot may be cast, I shall never forget the tenderness of a mother's love;—never shall I forget the affectionate solicitude which brought you to our bed-side every evening to see that all was safe with us ere your own eye could close in sleep;—never shall I forget——. But it is wrong to indulge in this. Let us forget the things that are behind, and rather delight to dwell on the glory and happiness that are before us. Oh, how highly favoured are we, my mother, with the blessed hope of a glorious immortality! God, it is true, has removed one of your children; and, for his sake, you are called to give up another;—but still though the cup may be bitter, it is a Father's hand that has mingled it. 'Trials make the promise sweet.' You will be able now more than ever to enjoy the delightful assurance, that the Lord will be to his people a portion, better than of sons and daughters.

And again, if we but think of what Christ has done for us we shall not think any sacrifice too great that we can make for him. He left the bosom of the Father, and emptied himself of his glory, and suffered more than ever man suffered, and died *for us*. Should we not then feel all the force of the argument which tells us, we are not our own having been bought by Christ, when he gave his blood as our ransom price? Is it not then a reasonable service to offer our bodies a living sacrifice to him? And then there is the blest assurance, that if we *suffer* with him, we shall also *reign* with him."

The following is to the afflicted friend to whom some of his former letters were addressed.

" St. Andrew's, March 5, 1826.

My very dear friend,

You can easily conceive how difficult it is for a young person, enjoying in all its fulness the inestimable blessing of health, and whose mind is ever actively engaged with one subject or another, all at once to place himself in the circumstances of an aged and long afflicted christian. Yet this I must try to do ere I can write in a strain of sympathy with your feelings. But though I cannot enter as I could wish into your peculiar circumstances, or write with all that closeness of sympathy, or administer that experimental consolation, which the person could who had seen as

much of life's chequered scene and passed through like trials with yourself; yet there are always some subjects in which christians feel a common interest, however different their circumstances, and however varied their experience. The great objects of our salvation are alike interesting in youth and in age; in joy and in sorrow; in health and in sickness; in seasons of prosperity and in the day of trial. What was said by a learned heathen of his favourite studies, (most beautifully, but most extravagantly, in his application of it,) might with great propriety be used by the christian in speaking of the truths of the Bible:— 'These studies cherish youth, sooth old age, adorn prosperity, and form in adversity a refuge and consolation; at home they are our delight, abroad they are no incumbrance; they are with us by night, they journey with us, and in our country retreat they are with us still.' What a pity that worldly men should be so enthusiastic in the praise of their favourite pursuits, while christians are so dull and careless about objects so much more highly deserving of their love. How few christians are there who could heartily and from their own experience apply to the joys and the consolations of the gospel, those ardent expressions of delight which a heathen philosopher employs in regard to merely human learning. So true is it, that the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.

I should suppose that to an aged christian who cannot look for much longer continuance in the

church below, the state and employment of the church above must be peculiarly interesting. To all christians it must be a subject of the most delightful contemplation; but more especially to those who hope to be very soon released from the prison house of the body. It was the joy set before him, which bore our Lord through the ignominy and the torture of his sufferings. And surely the prospect of such glory as is set before his disciples may well encourage and support them through every difficulty and every trial. It may well reconcile us to suffer with Christ, when we know that this is the sure pledge of our reigning with him. They who have been deepest in suffering for Christ's sake, shall be highest in glory. They who would sit on his right hand, when he is seated on his throne, must drink of the bitter cup which he drank of, and must be baptized with the bloody baptism with which he was baptized. The first disciples knew this, and therefore they were not only patient, but joyful in suffering, and were even apt to run into the extreme of courting danger. They did not count the tribulations of the gospel as trials, to which it was a painful duty to submit; but they regarded them as honours which it was no ordinary favour to win. 'For unto you it is given, in the behalf of Christ, (says the Apostle Paul,) not only to believe on him, but also (higher privilege still!) to suffer for his sake.' It is labour and fatigue which give to *rest* and *repose* their great value. Indeed, we have no idea of rest where there has been no

previous weariness or fatigue, and the harder the toil, or the more distressing the uneasiness, the sweeter is the rest which succeeds it. I have had little or no experience of bodily suffering, but I find it is these views of the glory that shall follow, which bear me up under the prospect of trials which sometimes burden me with not a little mental distress; and I trust that these hurried remarks may not be altogether useless, in administering some little consolation to you under your lengthened afflictions. May the Lord the Shepherd of Israel guide you! and may his rod and his staff be your comfort, when you tread the dark valley! Do not forget sometimes to pray for

Your very affectionate brother in the Lord Jesus."

As the end of his last session at college drew nigh, he became increasingly anxious about his future sphere of labour. He addressed two letters to Dr. Morrison, with which the doctor was much pleased as appears from his answers; and in the following letter to myself, he discloses all his mind, and intimates his final decision.

" St. Andrew's, March 10, 1826.

My very dear sir,

The end of our session is now at hand, and I begin to feel it necessary to determine on some settled plan to proceed upon afterwards. Mr. Adams and myself have made the subject of mis-

sions a matter of daily consideration this session; and after deliberately viewing all sides of the question, and candidly comparing the claims of our home population and the heathen world, and earnestly seeking for direction from Him who has promised to be the guide of his people even unto death, I have come to the final resolution of devoting myself to the service of God among the heathen. I have made the history of missions and the biography of missionaries a part of my daily study for some time, and have perused, I think, nearly all the principal works on the subject. And I am glad I have done so; for it has given me much sounder views of the matter than I had before. There is much in the distance of a foreign land, and the mystery that hangs over the operations that are carried on there; and, above all, in the high and often extravagant eulogiums which the eloquent advocates of missions have caused us to associate with the very name of *Missionary*;—there is much, I say, in all this, to produce a false impression on the mind of a young disciple. I remember when I first united myself to a christian society, being much disappointed to find that christians, though vastly different from the world, were still weak and imperfect creatures. And so I had been accustomed to form such a lofty conception of the character of a missionary, that I have been almost disappointed to find from their history that they are men of like infirmities with other christians; and certainly I have been a good deal depressed to find that many of them

were far from possessing that saintly devotedness and apostolic zeal which my boyish imagination had attributed to them. Indeed, I have to fear — that there was much of romance in my first thoughts of becoming a missionary; a good deal of what Mr. Malan, in writing to my friend Mr. Adam on the subject, calls ‘*un trait de l’imagination.*’ But I trust the detail of facts which has come under my review, has done much to dissipate this; and has, at the same time, impressed me more deeply than ever with the duty of engaging in this department of the ministerial work. The brilliant colouring of romance has faded from the picture; but its outlines seem even more strongly and broadly marked than before. I have not been discouraged by the sufferings of the missionary life;—they are borne for Christ’s sake. And happy indeed are they to whom it has been given on the behalf of Christ, *not only* to believe on him, *but also* to suffer for his sake. Neither do I feel discouraged by the want of success;—the expectations of christians on this subject appear to me very unreasonable. They put forth their little finger to remove a mountain, and are astonished that God does not work a miracle to reward their *great* exertions. But the promise of God stands sure: and though it tarry we will wait for it. One thing, I confess, has distressed me not a little;—it is the prospect of those temptations before which so many have fallen;—but I know it is wrong to fear. The God that enables us to stand in the midst of smaller temptations is able, and has pro-

mised to be with us at all times. I see that unwavering faith in God's promises, and closeness of communion with him, are among the main requisites in the character of a missionary. And in these I feel that I am very very deficient. O, pray for me, my dear friend, that He who has wrought in me to will, may also fit me to perform.

I have had a letter from Dr. Morrison. He recommends an early application to the society, and even talks of a very early entrance on the work itself. I trust I am ready to engage whenever the Lord will, but I think it is not a recoil from trial which makes me suppose that prudence might demand my still remaining a considerable time in this country. I am not yet eighteen. After this session I shall have nothing to prevent my engagement in direct preparation for missionary work. I should like to know the state of the society's arrangements. I was offered a very good situation some time ago, but was afraid it might in some degree interfere with my preparations for the work to which I am devoted. I have taught Dr. Chalmers's Sabbath-school for him this winter, as he is engaged otherwise. This has given me the opportunity of very familiar intercourse with the doctor. I sup with him on Sunday evenings, and have a good deal of conversation with him on the subject of missions, &c. He tries to persuade me to stay in this country, but I do not think his arguments powerful. I have refused to accept of any situation that may occur to him at present, in the prospect of soon offering myself to the society.

On this account I should like you to write soon, if possible, whether the society can receive applications this summer."

As this letter contains his decision respecting the important work which had so long occupied his attention, perhaps this is the proper place to introduce his concluding address to the St. Andrew's Missionary Society, which was in a great measure the fruit of his own exertions, and which he had cherished with the fondest affection. That address also, containing his matured views, will afford me the opportunity of making a few remarks on the subject, and on the opposition of his friends to his personal engagement in the work.

ADDRESS

To the St. Andrew's University Missionary Society, on the Duty of personal Engagement in the Work of Missions.

I am tired of arguing with the opponents of the missionary cause. It is my intention this evening to address myself to those who profess to be its friends.

I can easily conceive a mind so biassed by prejudice as to take a distorted view of every argument that can be adduced on this, or indeed on any

other subject whatever;—or a mind moving in such a sphere as never to have had these arguments fairly presented to it; and therefore I am by no means disposed to speak roundly of all who refuse to lend their aid to missionary societies, in a tone of unequivocal condemnation. But, I do confess, I cannot imagine a mind which has deliberately weighed the arguments and candidly considered the facts of this important subject, still refusing to embark its energies or its influence in some way or other, in the work of evangelizing the nations of the earth. Indeed, the cause of missions has already met with such able defence, and the arguments of its opponents have been so often refuted that they themselves seem to be almost sick of the very sound of their oft repeated objections. And more than this, as if to show that the subject is quite impregnable even at those points which the adversaries have never assailed, the advocates for the *promulgation* of christianity, like the advocates for the *truth* of christianity before them, have even brought forward fictitious objections of their own invention, in order to demonstrate with what perfect ease such objections could have been met, had the adversaries of the cause adduced them. And truly after the champions of the missionary cause have done their part so well, it seems altogether needless still to keep up the debate with those who seem determined to resist the appeals of the most cogent reasoning, and even to set at nought the authority of human testimony. For of those who persist in

denying the efficacy of missionary exertion, it may in truth be said, that they 'will not believe the great work which the Lord is working in these days, even though a man declare it unto them.' Surely, then, we cannot justly be charged with a want of charity when thus compelled to the belief that after all, this pretended opposition of judgment on the part of our adversaries is nothing but a screen for the coldness and indifference of their hearts.

I turn, therefore, altogether at present from those who oppose these exertions of christian philanthropy, and address myself to the friends of missions. I address myself to you who, by being the members of a missionary society, profess yourselves the advocates and supporters of this benevolent scheme; and more especially to those of you who, by entering on a course of study preparatory to the duties of the christian ministry, have thereby professed to devote yourselves unreservedly to the service of God, in the gospel of his Son.

And I do not address you, my friends, for the purpose of again repeating those unmeaning compliments that are wont to be presented to the subscribers and office-bearers of missionary societies at such meetings as the present. I do fear that there is too much of the tone of this world's flattering adulation in the public language of our missionary assemblies. The doctrine of this essay may be unpalatable, but I believe it to be true, That the members of missionary associations have absolutely done nothing, when we

consider the high demands of a cause whose object is the spiritual and moral renovation of a world. Neither do I address you for the purpose of picturing forth in the colouring of romance, the high devotedness of the missionary character, and lofty achievements of the missionary life. This has often been done already; but like most other poetic descriptions, while it has excited the imagination it has failed to influence the conduct. It may have caused him who listened, to indulge in some fairy dream of exile and martyrdom for the sake of his religion and his Saviour; while all the while it is quite possible that not only he, but even the very person who drew the splendid picture, may have remained altogether unimpressed with the sober convictions of a duty his imagination had set forth in such glowing characters. In reality, this has been the case. One cannot help wondering that of the many who have pleaded so earnestly for the cause of missions, and have declaimed so eloquently concerning the high dignity of the missionary enterprise, so few have been found who were willing to go forth to the combat. It seems to me that while the enemies of missions have altogether despised and vilified the missionary office, the advocates of missions have erred in the other extreme by regarding it with somewhat of a sentimental admiration, and by describing it rather as a work of supererogation than of duty.

We have been too much accustomed to regard the missionary life as an undertaking of most extraordinary magnitude, and as reserved for a few

of the more daring and devoted spirits in the race of living christians; and thus we easily succeed in pushing from ourselves the duty of personal engagement. But we would do well to view the matter apart from this borrowed splendour which, by its glare, obscures rather than brightens the object of our contemplation. After all, the greater part of the work must be accomplished by ordinary men. And I am persuaded if we but take a candid and sober view of the case, we shall begin to suspect that the matter *may* come home in the shape of duty even to ourselves. Great as are the sacrifices the missionary makes, they are but small when we take into account those sublime truths which we believe as well as he. And it is of the very deepest importance that we should bear in mind that those very sacrifices are represented in the Bible, not as the fruits of an over-reaching faith which may fall to the lot of, but here and there, a mind of apostolic endowment; but as the test simple of discipleship itself. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." If by these, and the remarks that follow, I can impress the mind of any one of you with the duty of engaging in this great undertaking, let me warn such an individual of the delusion of putting such convictions away from him on the ground that this is a work far too high for him to engage in; or, under the deceitful impression that his shrinking from such an enterprise is a sign merely

that his faith is weak, and has not yet acquired sufficient strength to warrant his engaging in a work of such difficulty and self-denial. If the words of Christ which I have just repeated, be true, to shrink from duty even in the face of all the trials that present themselves in the contemplation of the missionary life, does not argue a weakness of faith merely, but a want of faith. The man who is not ready to part with country and even life itself, at the bidding of the Saviour, is not worthy of the name of a disciple.

Now were it not that the minds of all of us, in regard to this subject, are under the influence of most overpowering and bewildering prejudices, I am sure I should only have to lay before you the present state of missionary operations, in order to convince you of the duty of taking the question into most serious consideration. Whether you may not be called to engage in this work of evangelizing the heathen? You give your assent to the duty of sending the gospel to pagan countries, and by your subscriptions you profess yourselves willing to co-operate in the accomplishment of this grand object. And so far, you have done well. You may have thought you were doing all that was in your power for the furtherance of the great design, and you may have never once suspected that there was any call for greater services on your part. But if I can convince you that there is such a call, then on the simple score of consistency, you are bound to listen to it and to obey it. For, if this matter demands our attention at all,

it demands our deepest attention; if it has a right to our services at all, it has a right to our most devoted services. If you are not prepared to make greater sacrifices in this cause than you have ever yet done, when manifestly called to do so, then the little you have done will only serve most clearly to condemn you. Others, who deny the importance or disbelieve the efficacy of the missionary project, may have some plausible excuse for standing aloof: they are at least consistent with their own profession. But, assuredly, it does convict us of singular hard-heartedness towards our fellow men, if our zeal for their conversion can carry us the length of giving up a few paltry shillings, which were not surrendered, it may be, at the expense of a single comfort,—and that our zeal can carry us no farther. We might pardon, though we could not defend, the incredulity of the individual who would not believe that some family near was in a state of starvation; but we should utterly detest the sordid avarice and unfeeling apathy of the man who, by giving something, should just show us that he gave credit to the tale of suffering, and who yet, by the worthlessness of the trifle which he gave, should let us see that the wretchedness of his neighbour had made no suitable impression on his heart.

Now, I say, there is a call for much more devoted services on your part, than you have ever yet rendered in the work of evangelizing the nations. If we are disposed to estimate the prosperity of the missionary cause from the sums that are

annually poured into its coffers, we should indeed augur well of its success. But you are aware, that after all, *money* is but a subordinate part of the apparatus. It may be the main spring of the machine, but it is not the machine itself. The agents who go forth to the work, are the effective part of the mechanism. And what avails it that we have obtained a good moving power, if there be no machine to set in motion? A good will to the cause of missions has been on the increase, but there is every reason to fear that the spirit of missionary zeal is on the decline. It has grown more fashionable of late to subscribe to missionary societies: in consequence of this, the revenues of the different societies have been so increased as would enable them to extend their plans, could they but find a sufficient number of zealous and devoted agents. But such is the languishing state of missionary zeal, — so little is there of what Horne would call “a passion for missions,” that it is with considerable difficulty the present stations can be supplied; and in such circumstances it is altogether vain to talk of extending the plan of missionary operations.

When first the proposal was made to send the heralds of salvation to the ends of the earth, the christian world received the proposal with eagerness and joy. A splendid equipment was fitted out, and many were desirous of sharing the honours of the victory that was so confidently and so ardently anticipated. But the novelty of the missionary enterprise is gone; and it would seem

that that spirit of undaunted chivalry which a scheme of such lofty sublimity and such disinterested benevolence at first excited, has languished and well nigh expired under the heavy pressure of those difficulties and discouragements which an actual experiment has brought to light.

The Scottish Missionary Society is in want of labourers;—the London Missionary Society is in want of labourers;—the Church Missionary Society (to the shame of the churchmen of England be it told) have for some time been compelled to gather the missionaries whom they send forth, from the other countries of Europe. And, to sum up all, even among the Moravians themselves, so famed for the devotedness of their missionary zeal, that spirit of other days which could brook slavery and death for the sake of Jesus, would seem to have died away. Of them it once could be said, that no sooner was a missionary station vacant than there was an eager competition who should have the honour to supply it; for then it was counted an honour for the love they bore to Christ, to succeed to a dreary station amid eternal snows, or to fill the places of those who had fallen by the murderous hand of the savages for whose sakes they had left their country and their home. But now there is a difficulty in finding persons willing to go even to stations of ordinary comfort and ease. In this state of matters, what avails the increase of missionary funds? Do you not feel that there is a loud call for something more than mere subscriptions? And to whom can

this appeal be made, but to the members of missionary associations? And on whom can it be urged home more forcibly than on those who have professed to surrender the whole energies of their minds and their bodies to the promulgation of the religion of Christ?

This is a statement of facts, and such a statement, I am sure, would be quite sufficient to call forth the willing offer of his services, from any one who believes in the efficacy of missionary exertions and who is not tied down by some peculiar circumstances to his native land, were it not that the mind is driven from its convictions of duty, by prejudices and affections the strongest that can influence our nature, and I will even say, the purest that can oppose the will of God. Accordingly I have found in my own experience, that even those who are most liberal in their donations to missionary societies, and most active in spreading among their friends a spirit of good will to this work of christian philanthropy, immediately abate their ardour, and turn upon another tack, so soon as the duty of personal engagement is pressed home upon themselves, or even upon any of their near relations. Those who are most strenuous in their arguments for the general cause of missions, instantly start objections to the proposal of themselves becoming missionaries. A thousand plausible arguments immediately present themselves. Our own country has much higher claims upon us:—all are not yet converted here. Besides, the success of missionaries has not been

very great; and we think we can do more good by remaining at home. Such arguments when in the mouth of an opponent to the general cause of missions, none so forward to answer or so eloquent in refuting as they; and yet, to the very same refuges do they betake themselves, when we merely carry out a little farther, and make a new application of their own previous assertions.

Nor do I at all wonder at this, though I cannot apologize for it. The ties which bind us to our country and our home cannot be so easily broken. The love which we bear to parents, and sisters, and brothers, and a whole circle of affectionate friends, is perhaps the strongest passion that has its seat in the human breast; and christianity, far from impairing, refines and strengthens the attachment. The land which gave us birth, and where our fathers lived before us,—and the companions of our youth,—and the affectionate guardians of our tender infancy,—are objects which most, of earthly things, deserve our love. There is but one, and only *one Being*, in the universe, whom we are commanded to love with a stronger affection. It is little wonder then, that when feelings like these; so strong, that no time or distance can ever efface their influence; and so pure, that piety itself imparts to them a tone of deeper tenderness; that when feelings like these exert an opposing influence, even the most devoted christian should be startled at the first proposal of a duty which speaks destruction to them all.

It is on this account that I feel the statement of

facts I have laid before you, may not be sufficient to call forth your services to a work which loudly calls for them, and in which you profess to take an interest. It is only on this account that I feel that the statement I have made needs to be enforced by arguments. For I believe that to a mind which could take an unprejudiced view of the matter, no reasoning would be required to convince him of the urgency of the appeal, and no argument, however strong, could add to the force of the simple statement.

I feel, however, that it is necessary to reason with you. And the main argument on which I would insist, is founded on the commandment of our Saviour; "Go ye and teach all nations." This has been often repeated by the advocates of missionary exertion; and though it may thereby have lost something of its freshness, it has yet lost nothing of its force. I consider it still the strong hold of the missionary cause. But I am inclined to take a more extended view of the precept. Not only do I look upon this little verse as the great foundation on which all arguments for missions must be received; but as the only scriptural authority which we can have for preaching the gospel at all. I can conceive many other inducements which lead men in our own land to profess or pretend to be the ministers of God. But I believe that every truly christian minister in the land, must rest the whole authority of his commission on this and similar commandments. Now you must all perceive the bearing of this

argument. It places our own country exactly on the same footing with the other nations of the earth: and it makes the work of the missionary abroad, and the minister at home, one and the same work. *The world is the field*, and the preaching of the gospel is the work to be accomplished. And it is only in as far as Great Britain is one of the "*all nations*" specified in the terms of the commission, that we have any warrant from scripture to preach the gospel here. Grant me but this view of the subject, and the question comes home with irresistible force. How comes it that all the labourers should have contrived to cluster together in one little corner of the vineyard? What special order has been given by the Lord about this little island on which we dwell? Or, in what does the vast superiority of its claims consist? It is nothing to my argument that in this country an ecclesiastical establishment has poured forth its benefices over the land, and has connected with the profession of the christian ministry the comforts of civilized life and the enjoyments of a refined society, or the opportunities of literary and scientific retirement. With the hirelings that have crept into the church, at present I have nothing to do. Neither is it any thing to me that numerous sectaries with which some of us may be connected, have spread themselves over the land and are struggling for the superiority. I have no sympathy with the outcry that is made by each rival party, about the interests of *their cause*. I know of no cause that demands the homage of our

hearts, and our services, but the cause of Christ. Now, strip our country of these, and other accessory distinctions, which I think all of you will admit should have no controul in giving it a higher claim on our christian services, and then tell me wherein it differs from other lands, in as far as the scriptural argument for preaching the gospel is concerned.

I am persuaded, that with all our knowledge of geography, we are accustomed from irresistible prejudices, to rate the extent and importance of our own country much too high. Now, in order to dissipate this delusion and give the subject a more manageable appearance, let us try if we can take a reduced sketch of the world, diminishing every thing proportionally, just as a land surveyor finds it convenient to draw upon paper a reduced representation of the estate which he has been measuring.

Let us imagine, that instead of the world, a single country had been pointed out by our Lord as the field of action. And, since we are most familiar with our own land, let us just suppose that the particular country specified was the island of Great Britain: and that, instead of the command to go forth into all nations and preach the gospel to every creature, the order had been, to go throughout all the counties of this island and preach the gospel to every inhabitant. I find, that on a scale which would make the population of Great Britain represent that of the world, the population of such a county as Mid Lothian might

be taken as a sufficiently accurate representation of the population of our own land.

In order then to have a just picture of the present state of the world, only conceive that all who had received the above commission, some how or other had contrived to gather themselves together within the limits of this single county. Imagine to yourselves, all the other divisions of Scotland and England immersed in heathen darkness; and that by these christians who had so unaccountably happened to settle down together in one little spot, no effort was made to evangelize the rest of the land, except by collecting a little money, and sending forth two or three itinerants to walk single-handed through the length and breadth of the country.

I shall be told, however, that illustration is not argument; and so distorted have our views been on this subject that you will be disposed to think this a perfect caricature of the matter. But I deny that this is an illustration at all. It is merely a representation on a reduced scale: and I believe you will find it to be a correct representation of the state of the world. It is no argument against the conclusions of the practical mathematician that his calculations have had to do not with the very objects or doctrines themselves, about which he determines, but with proportional representations of them which he has delineated. The very same thing holds here. And if you but grant the correctness of my representation, then the deductions made from it are every whit as

conclusive as if our minds could so expand, as to do away with the necessity of the representation, and could gather their conclusions with as much ease from the consideration of the objects themselves about which we reason.

You will permit me, therefore, to argue from the representation a little farther.

Were I to ask you what, in the case we supposed, you would imagine to be the duty of the ministers who had clustered within the limits of a single county, when their commission embraced every county in the land? You would at once reply, that they ought to spread themselves over the face of the country, till every corner of the field shared equally in the benefit of their ministration. Now I am almost afraid to transfer this question from the representation to the actual case before us. Not but that I believe I might most legitimately do so, but because I feel that I cannot carry along with me the sympathies of the christian world. In fact, I am arguing at present for a much humbler effort than the fair answer to such a question would land us in. To return to our ideal field of operation, let us suppose that even the little band of itinerants began to fail, and a difficulty was found to recruit their numbers. Let us suppose that the funds collected were sufficient to send forth more, if any could be found who were willing to go. Let us try if we can fancy any thing in the shape of excuse, which our professed evangelists could allege for still refusing to quit the little territory to which they

had all along so pertinaciously adhered. Some might say, they did not think it was the proper time to go forth. You might meet them with the unlimited command of their Master; and especially his promise, to be *always* with them in the work to which the commandment called them. Others might say, they did not think those who had gone forth already had taken the right plan; and might even urge, in support of this, that actually the two or three preachers who had been sent forth had not yet converted the country. The direct reply to such would be, The error of another is no apology for your disobedience; it is only a louder call to you to fulfil the command of your Lord, by some plan which will be more agreeable to his will. Such excuses might be framed by those who had never co-operated in the little effort that had been made. But can you conceive that those who had given their entire consent to the plan itself, and had been zealous in sending forth others, could have any imaginable excuse from shrinking back when their personal services were called for? Let us try if we can invent any. They might tell us there were yet many within the little sphere they had allotted to themselves who were yet unconverted. They might bear witness to their own negligence, by telling us that actually there were still some within their own sphere of action, to whom the message they had received from the Lord had never been fairly delivered. They might express their apprehension that if they began to go forth

over the face of the country, the little spot which they had hitherto cultivated with so much care might hereafter be overlooked in the wide field which lay before them, and come to be altogether neglected. And some might even have the effrontery to tell us that they quite felt the urgency of the call to go forth over the face of the country; but for their part they had rather stay at home, and persuade others to go.

You feel that there is something ludicrous in the very description. There is such an utter discrepancy between the command and the professed obedience of it; between the work to be performed, and the scantiness of the means that are expected to accomplish it; between the obvious calls of duty, and the frivolous excuses by which they are evaded. Now, would this were but an imaginary picture; but it must recommend itself to all of you as too true a representation of the present state of the world, and of the kind of obedience which the disciples of Christ render to the last command of their Lord and Saviour.

I have thus tried to set before you, and illustrate my main argument, that the world is one field, and consequently that every minister of Christ should be ready to go to that part of the field, wherever it be, which stands most in need of his services. You must perceive that we have taken it upon ourselves to circumscribe most unwarrantably, the limits of our commission; and that in these days nothing adequate to the fulfilment of our Lord's command has so much as been

attempted. I have pressed upon you the loud demand that there is at present for labourers, in order to maintain even the comparatively feeble effort which the christian world has of late put forth ; and you perceived that the objections to this appeal just hinted at, appeared sufficiently frivolous. I am aware, however, that on these or similar objections, the whole force of your refusal to obey this call, must rest ? and therefore I feel it necessary to take each of them singly into more serious consideration.

I shall say nothing concerning the argument that the heathen are not in a fit state for receiving the gospel, and other similar objections. These are adduced only by the opponents of missionary societies. I take it for granted at present, that I am addressing those who give their full assent to the duty of sending the gospel to the heathen, and who give their decided approbation to the plans that are in operation for the accomplishment of this grand object. The arguments which I mean to consider at present, are those which are urged by the supporters of missionary operations, when a demand is made for their own personal services. Among the most prominent of these is the assertion, that all are not yet converted in our own land, and therefore our own country has the first claim upon our regard. The terms of the argument are very true, but the conclusion drawn from it I believe to be false. It is a lamentable fact that so many in our own land are not under the power of the gospel. But why ? In by far the

greater number of instances, because they will not come unto Christ that they may have life. Have they not had the message of mercy proclaimed to them, and what more can the messenger do? Have they not been plied, Sabbath after Sabbath, with the call to repent and believe the gospel, and if they still remain impenitent, what more can man accomplish? Can we hope to do more than apostles, with all their miraculous powers and their unwavering faith, could effect? When the gospel was declared by those extraordinary men who had trod this earth in the company of their incarnate God; and who, after he left them, were visited with the supernatural endowments of his Spirit; the account of their success is, that "some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not." And as long as the Scripture doctrine of election holds true, it will still be found wherever this gospel is proclaimed, that some will receive the message, and some will most obstinately reject it. Far be it from me to adduce the doctrine of election as a reason why we should ever cease to ply with all our earnestness, and admonish with all our tenderness, the most hardened unbeliever, or the veriest scoffer at sacred things. But I am quite warranted in adducing it, in order to show the fallacy of the expectation that we shall ever be able, by any concentration of our energies to any sphere however narrow, to convert *all* who dwell within these limits, to the truth of the gospel. We do well to consider whether by such expectations we be not

opposing the purposes of God. He has given us no reason to indulge the hope that he will choose his people exclusively from our nation, although that nation has been favoured very highly. He has said, that he will take one of a city and two of a family; and it is said of the redeemed in heaven, that they have been gathered "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation."

But it may be said, that I am not giving a fair view of the case, for that very many in our own land have never had the message of mercy fairly proclaimed to them. This is too true, and a disgrace it is to the ministers, and even the private christians of Britain. How easily might the numerous evangelical ministers of the land, or at least the evangelical ministers among the dissenters, who are hindered by no ecclesiastical authority from preaching the truth where they think it has not been fully declared; how easily, I say, might they dispel the ignorance that yet darkens the spiritual atmosphere of this enlightened country! But, after all, I do not feel the force of this claim when weighed against the claim of those who are literally perishing for lack of knowledge. I do believe that every inhabitant of our land has heard so much, as makes him utterly inexcusable if he be ignorant of the way of acceptance before God. If he sit under a minister who perverts, or but imperfectly declares the gospel, he has the standard of truth in his hand, and by the Bible he can, and he ought to try the doctrine, whether it be of God. If he have not a Bible himself, he

has seen it in the possession of others, or at least he has heard that there is such a book, which many believe to be a revelation from heaven. And, finally, even in the haunts of the most abandoned depravity, where ignorance and wickedness may have spread a gloom as dismal as the darkness of paganism itself:—even there the wretched inmates are still reminded of a God and a Saviour; if by nothing else, yet by the weekly return of a day of unusual stillness, and by the oft repeated and well known invitations of the Sabbath bell. But when you urge as an excuse for remaining in this land, that some within its borders are yet ignorant of the terms of mercy, do you indeed mean to wander from parish to parish, and illumine every dark corner on which the light of truth has not yet shone? Or will you venture, where none have dared to venture before you, within the receptacles of vice and infamy, to proclaim the tale of a Saviour's sufferings to those who may never have heard of his name? If you will not, or cannot do these things, then this argument is no argument for you.

Closely connected with this objection, that all are not yet converted in our own land, there is the apprehension lest a spirit of missionary zeal should damp the spirit of exertion at home, and that our own country should suffer from our attention to foreign lands. The spirit which excites this apprehension for the eternal welfare of our countrymen, deserves the highest commendation. But depend upon it the fear is quite unfounded. I am quite

willing to allow that our kinsmen according to the flesh, have the first claim upon our christian sympathy. It is true that as the messengers of Christ, and as far as the command of our Saviour is concerned, the world is all before us, and no country has any peculiar claim upon our regard. But as men who are linked to those around us by bonds so strong as those of relationship, and all the other connexions which form the cement of civil society, there is no doubt something very peculiar in the claims of our native land. To true patriotism I am willing to allow all the eulogiums that poets and orators have heaped upon it. The love of our country is a very noble affection. But there is a thing which has been misnamed patriotism, which consists not so much in loving our own country, as in despising and disregarding every other. But surely it but ill accords with the liberal sentiment of the present age, to despise any brother of the human family, because he has not sworn allegiance to the same sovereign with ourselves ; or because, forsooth, he happens to be separated from us by some river and mountain, or imaginary political boundary. Time was, when in our own little country, every petty chief was a monarch ; and whatever may be the associations that romance has gathered around these olden times, every generous mind must look back with detestation and disgust on that narrow minded spirit of clanship, which could tie down the affections of an individual to the few families that happened to bear the same name or to serve the

same lord with himself, and which pronounced him the noblest of his clan, who hated with the deadliest malice the whole world besides. But what is this pretended patriotism but the dross of this same detestable spirit. We surely have not need to be told in this age of enlightened liberality, that God has made of one blood all nations that are on the face of the earth. And if the spirit of the age cannot reclaim us, christianity at least should reclaim us from such bigotted narrowness. A spirit of true patriotism is in perfect harmony with a spirit of the most extended liberality. Your benevolence must overflow the narrower channel, ere it can dilate itself over a wider surface. Just tell me of a man that he is a general philanthropist, and I can immediately conceive of that man, that his family and social affections are stronger than those of other individuals. There may be exceptions to this rule, it is true ; for it is quite possible to find monsters in the moral world, as well as in the natural. All I assert is, that it is the general tendency of an extended benevolence to unite us in closer affection than ever, to those objects which have a nearer relation to us. And, indeed, in the late extension of our christian philanthropy to other lands, this principle has been most beautifully illustrated. Whence sprung our tract societies, our school societies, our itinerant societies, and the other institutions that are now in operation for instructing the ignorant of our own land. They have all originated in the impulse that was given to christian philanthropy, by the formation

of the missionary society. The stream of christian benevolence, when it sought its way to the ends of the earth, first filled and overflowed the reservoir that had contained it. The very consideration of the case of those who were farther removed from them, made the christians of our land take a deeper interest in the situation of those who were connected with them by stronger ties. It is on this account that I would have you to extend your views still farther, till not only would I have you think of our country as a little spot, when compared with the world; that so you may feel the close relationship that exists between ourselves and our fellow-countrymen: but-I would have you think of this globe itself, on which we dwell, as but one among the myriads that travel with it in their mighty journeys through boundless immensity. And then will you begin to feel that the whole human race forms but one little family in the universe of God. We shall thus yet forget those little distinctions which the ambition and avarice of man have made upon the face of our globe. We shall feel ourselves to be denizens of this earth, and inhabitants of the universe. We shall feel that we are united to our fellow-men by stronger ties than the indefinite relation which subsists among all the creatures of God. Are we not united by the ties of a common nature? Are we not involved in a common calamity, in that we have forfeited the favour of our God; a calamity which, for aught we know, may have happened to our race alone, of all the families of the universe?

And is not a common pardon offered, and has not a common Saviour died for us all?

I have thus tried to answer the objections that spring from an overweening partiality to our own country, and from the ignorance and unbelief that still exists there. But by far the most triumphant answer to all these arguments is founded on the authority of apostolic example. Paul the Apostle had a much stronger attachment to his country, than any modern patriot can boast. He wished himself even accursed from Christ, for his brethren's sake, and yet he gloried in being the apostle of the Gentiles. But there were feelings stronger than patriotism that bound the early disciples to the land of their fathers: feelings which none but an Israelite could experience. Their country was the favoured land of heaven. Their countrymen were the chosen people of God. And if any may urge as an excuse for lingering in the land of their nativity, that all their countrymen had not yet embraced the gospel, assuredly the apostles and early evangelists might have used this plea. But far different was their conduct. They thought it enough to have fairly offered the terms of mercy to their countrymen, and when some rejected the message which they delivered, so far from thinking this a reason why they should still remain, they considered it as the very signal for their departure. They thought that those who had never had the offer of God's favour, had now a prior claim upon their regard; and they addressed their countrymen in such language as the following: "It was

necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."

There is still one other argument, perhaps the most plausible of all, against engaging in the work of missions, and to which I beg very briefly to advert. It is, that in the present state of matters we can do more good at home than abroad. A minister in this country, it is said, may make as many and sometimes more converts than the missionary in a heathen country. And the question is triumphantly put, Whether the soul that is converted at the distance of some thousands of miles from our land, be more precious than the soul which is converted in our own neighbourhood? And whether it be not a matter of as great thankfulness and joy that a soul has been delivered from a state of self-delusion, though living in a country called christian, as that a heathen has been turned from idols to serve the living God. The argument has a great semblance of fairness, but I think we shall find it to be unsound.

In the first place, it is not true that in general the success of ministers at home is greater than that of those who labour in heathen lands. And, secondly, though it be allowed that the conversion of a soul is not more acceptable to God because of the place where the conversion is wrought; yet there is much in the case of those who first turn to the Lord from a nation of idolaters that may well fill our hearts with unusual joy and

thankfulness, inasmuch as these are the *first fruits* of a hitherto uncultivated field, and may be regarded as the earnest of an abundant harvest. In the same manner you can easily conceive how a few grains of wheat, though comparatively of little worth in a cultivated country, might acquire an immense value in a new colony where no other seed could be obtained. Besides, there is much in preparing the way. We are not to suppose that the conversion of a world is to be the work of one generation. The ground must be cleared ere we can so much as sow the seed, and this must be a season of toil, and difficulty, and discouragement.

You would perceive the fallacy of the objection now under consideration, in almost any case but the one before us. Let us suppose an accommodation of our Saviour's parable of the vineyard, to the present circumstances of the world. Imagine to yourselves all the husbandmen to have settled down in one little fertile corner of the vineyard, and to have left all the rest with the soil unbroken up, covered with briars and thorns, and trodden down by the beasts of the forest. When called to account for their negligence, you may conceive them to answer; our fathers have planted vines, and they have yielded fruit luxuriantly; and we truly thought that we were acting best for your advantage in choosing that spot for our labours where the fruit was most abundant. Who would not see, in such a case, that their own ease had been consulted, and not their master's interest?

And who could help the suspicion that they wanted to press into their own cup of the overflowing vintage?

I have thus tried to set before you the present state of the missionary cause, and the loud call which there is for efficient labourers. I have stated to you the great argument that the world is one field, and that our Saviour's command is not fulfilled so long as the distribution of his ministers over this field is so very unequal. And, finally, I have tried to answer some of the objections that are made to personal engagement in the work.

The matter sometime ago presented itself very forcibly to my own mind, and I felt that it at least demanded my serious consideration. As I have proceeded with my inquiries on the subject, the difficulties seemed to have gathered thicker on the prospect, but the convictions of duty have grown stronger too. The arguments for personal engagement seem to me to have acquired the strength of a demonstration. I have, therefore, resolved, with the help of God, to devote my life to the cause; and I have only solemnly to charge every one of you who are looking forward to the ministry of Christ, to take this matter into most serious consideration.

Some of you may think that I have not satisfactorily answered the objections which may be urged against personally engaging in the work; and other objections may possibly present themselves to some of you. But I ask you seriously

to examine whether there do not lurk under these objections, a want of devotedness to God, and a secret love of the world. Why is it that there is an eager competition for the ministerial office in our own land, where a comfortable salary is annexed to the preaching of the gospel? And why is it that the love of country can be overcome whenever any worldly advantage is to be gained? But when the gospel is to be preached where there is no reward, but the reward of winning souls to Christ; and no honour, but the honour that cometh from God;—there alone the ranks of the labourers are thin, and there deficiencies can with difficulty be supplied. I mean no uncharitable insinuations respecting your motives; but I ask you if too much reason has not been given for the outcry that has been made against priestcraft by the worldling or the infidel?

Do not think I wish to press you into this service. It is a maxim, which much experience has taught the Moravians, never to persuade any man to become a missionary. I have laid the matter before you, and I leave it with your own conscience, as you soon must answer before God.

I have the happiness to mention to you, that your respected secretary of last year, has given himself to the work; and I know that there are some present who have felt the urgency of the call.

I am not without the hope, that even from this unnoticed Association, a little band of devoted labourers may be raised up, who shall carry the

name of their Saviour to the ends of the earth ; and shall meet in another world, to receive that high reward which is reserved for those who have left father, and mother, and sister, and brother, and houses, and lands, for Christ's sake, and the gospel's.

Very far be it from me to write a single sentence that might diminish the force, or detract from the earnestness of this energetic and eloquent appeal.

On the society to which it was read, it produced a most powerful effect ; and on their minutes, they have made the following entry of that impression: " Never probably, in any Association, had such an address, on such a subject, been before delivered. To say that it was most eloquent, most solemn, most affecting, the production of a mind of mighty grasp ; sedulously and continuously directed to one single object of mightiest import, may convey to those who heard it not, some idea of the impression produced by it."

I trust it is destined to touch the hearts of many whom the living voice of the author never could have reached. I envy not the understanding, or the feelings of that individual who can read the address without experiencing a higher emotion than that of admiration. It is impossible not to be struck with the deep earnestness of the advocate,

the cogency of his reasoning, and the affection and simplicity of his manner. Here are "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn," on a subject the most momentous which can engage the mind of man.

Were there any danger of this address producing a general rush into the missionary service, and a desertion of the service at home, it might be necessary to enter some exceptions to certain parts of it. But as long as the love of home and of ease, and various other considerations operate, there is little probability that we shall have to check the fervour of missionary zeal. Perhaps my young friend, however, a little exaggerates the low state of this principle, and represents the deficiency of missionary candidates as greater than it really is. What is chiefly to be regretted is, the paucity of well-educated and gifted men for this work. By far the greater number of persons who volunteer their services, are young men of christian principle, but whose early advantages have been comparatively few. In this respect, there has, indeed, been some progress of late, but still there is much room for improvement.

Without throwing any reflection on persons in humble life and limited education, who wish to devote themselves to this work, I do conceive that in many instances, the failure which has taken place in our foreign operations, may partly, at least, be traced to this source. When a young person under examination, tells us that the extent

of his reading has been the Bible, Boston's Fourfold State, Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, and the Evangelical Magazine; and that, from these and similar sources, with attending missionary services, he has derived all his knowledge of the work in which he proposes to engage; it is obviously impossible, whatever dépendance may be placed on his sincerity, to attach any confidence to his knowledge of the nature of the work.

Such a person is perhaps accepted; and, after passing through a hurried and imperfect education, is sent forth to some important and difficult situation abroad. There difficulties and trials assail him, for which he is altogether unprepared; and, after floundering and blundering a few years, becomes either dispirited or ensnared, and effects nothing. Perhaps he has been suddenly elevated to a class of society in which he had not been accustomed to mingle, and from that circumstance is exposed to danger which would scarcely affect persons of another description. It ought not to be concealed that missionaries labouring in certain situations among the heathen, enjoy advantages which are not possessed by their brethren in the ministry at home; and this circumstance, if caution is not exercised, is in danger of producing great injury to our cause.

While remarking on the importance of obtaining men of a higher order of intelligence and preparation for the work, I shall be pardoned if I suggest that the Missionary Society has pursued what I conceive to be, a narrow and short-sighted

policy. When young men belonging to the dissenting academies, after having nearly or entirely completed their education, have offered their services, the society has refused to reimburse the expense of their education to the academy. This refusal has generally been grounded on the alleged selfishness and illiberality of the demand. But I conceive that the illiberality is on the other side. It is well known that the funds of the Missionary Society are more amply supplied than those of our home academies; which, for the greater part, are supported with much difficulty. Their object is, the education of young men for the benefit of those churches which support them. Their tutors, though all of them men of missionary and catholic spirit, are placed in a delicate situation; for were many of these students after finishing their academical course, to become missionaries, the academy would be annihilated. Not being found to answer the purpose, it would be abandoned. Whereas, did the Missionary Society defray the past expense of the individual's education, it would not signify how many became foreign labourers. The tutors would be induced to cherish a spirit of missionary zeal among the students, instead of discountenancing it, or at least, saying as little as possible on the subject.

In every point of view, the Missionary Society must be a gainer by adopting this principle of action. The expense of an individual thus made ready to their hand, would generally be much less than that of one educated by themselves. It would,

besides, be a vast saving of time and trouble. But these are small advantages compared with another. What a difference is there between the views and principles of a man whose education has been completed, and those of a person who has it to begin! How much more confidence can you repose in the conclusions of an enlightened and well disciplined mind, than in those of an individual who looks at every object vaguely and incorrectly!

By this means too, a greater identity would be given to our home and foreign operations. To the sentiment of the preceding paper I most fully subscribe, that they are one and the same cause. The common field of labour is the world; and every christian is bound to labour in that part of the field in which he may prove most useful. The objects have too often been placed in contrast, and even in opposition to each other. This is neither wise nor christian. I see no good reason why every academy may not be a missionary school. Four-fifths of the education necessary for ministers at home, is necessary and suitable for missionaries abroad. Every man ought to have the full opportunity of acting the part of a volunteer. After finishing his course, he is better qualified for judging where he ought to devote his energies and his talents, than when he began it. Though educated to go to the heathen, if his faith or his courage fail, or his inclinations begin to waver, I would cheerfully allow him to remain at home; and if educated for home, he ought as cheerfully to be allowed and encouraged to go abroad.

As so much reference is made by John in his letters, to the opposition of his friends and others, to his desire to devote himself to the work of Christ among the heathen, I feel called on to explain the nature and reasons of this opposition, which, I apprehend, he never properly understood. Not having opposed him myself after I saw his mind was fully made up, my explanation may be received with the greater confidence. As the opposition was not from worldly people, or from religious persons under the influence of worldly motives, the explanation is the more necessary.

I believe then, that that opposition arose entirely from two causes; the state of his constitution, and the character of his mind. All who knew him feared that his bodily constitution would never bear the effects of a warm climate. Though liable to no particular complaint, he was delicate from a child, and incapable of enduring much fatigue or exposure. Of this his parents were most sensible, and hence their decided reluctance to allow him to go abroad. The event proved that their fears were too well grounded.

Other friends connected his mental with his bodily constitution, and feared the labours of a missionary life would soon prove fatal. He possessed a highly morbid sensibility, which rendered him liable to exquisite sufferings from circumstances that would not have greatly affected more robust and hardy individuals. He was formed for society, and was dependent upon it in a great degree, for his support and capability of acting.

This is most strongly marked in many of his letters. In connexion with this, the kind of talent which he possessed, would have fitted him for eminent usefulness in this country; while his exquisite taste and various other qualifications, would have been, to a considerable extent, lost in a foreign country. I am not disposed to underrate the talents necessary for foreign missionary labour, or to exaggerate the importance of our own, yet I freely acknowledge that I am one of the number who would have rejoiced that John Urquhart had laboured at home, rather than have gone abroad.

It was too delicate a matter to press these reasons upon him; but I am sure they are the only reasons which weighed with Dr. Chalmers, Mr. Ewing, and various other individuals, from whom he considered himself as experiencing more opposition than he had been prepared to expect. It is every day becoming more evident, that men of a high order of talent in the christian ministry, are required in this country. The successful prosecution of the work abroad renders this no less necessary than the nature of the work at home; and it would augur ill for the cause of Christ generally, were such gifted individuals all disposed to forsake our own shores. Of this, however, there is no great reason to entertain much fear.

I cannot, perhaps, better conclude the account of his progress during this last session at St. Andrew's, than by giving at length several docu-

ments with which I have been furnished. It is always more satisfactory to report the evidence of eye and intimate witnesses, than to indulge in general and hypothetical reasonings; and I have found it a very peculiar advantage in conducting this narrative, that in almost every step of the religious life of this interesting youth, I can adduce the evidence of those who were so closely connected with him that they had the best opportunities of judging; and who were at the same time, well qualified to form a judgment of him. His friend Mr. Duff writes as follows:

“In the session of 1825-6 his growth in spirituality was quite extraordinary. Literature and science now dwindled, in his view, into comparative insignificance; they no longer occupied the greatest portion of his time; they no longer possessed exclusive charms; it was sufficient for casting them into the shade, that of them it might be asserted, as of the earthquake and the fire of Elijah, ‘that the Lord was not there.’ He, no doubt, this session, gained the third prize in the natural philosophy class, which, from the highly scientific nature of the course, is generally reckoned no ordinary attainment; but this he owed entirely to his real superiority of intellect, as it was gained without labour, without effort, without much preparation. Indeed, he could not bear the thought of spending much time on what appeared to him to be but of secondary importance. Christianity now became the *constant* subject of his

meditation; the cause of Christ the *constant* theme of his discourse. How to be useful to the souls of men; how to promote the honour and glory of his Redeemer; attracted all his thoughts, and formed the object of his fondest desires. He seemed full of the spirit of the reformer, proclaiming in all his words and actions, 'None but Christ, none but Christ.'"

Besides the prize in the natural philosophy class, referred to by Mr. Duff, he gained a prize in the Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Syriac class, "as a testimony," says Professor Baird, "of my high approbation of his correct and exemplary conduct, and of the many proofs of excellent talents and distinguished proficiency which he exhibited while attending that class."

I should also mention that he had attended the natural history class during the session; and from some drawings and papers which remain, it is evident that he had made considerable progress in botany. With mineralogy and chemistry he was also well acquainted. The testimony he received from the lecturer on natural history is entitled to a place :

"St. Andrew's, April 29, 1826.

Mr. John Urquhart was enrolled a student of natural history in the United Colleges of St. Salv. and St. Leon. at the commencement of the session now closed; and, from the unremitted regularity

of his attendance, the interest he took in the course, and the intelligence of his conversations on the subject, I have every reason to believe that had there been public examinations, he would have been as eminent in the natural history as he has been in every class of the United College.

JOHN MACVICAR,
Col. Lect. Nat. Hist."

From another of his fellow-students, and indeed his fellow-lodger, I have received the following very ample view of his character and talents. The writer, I have reason to know, is well entitled to pronounce his judgment; and all that he says, is at once most correct as well as judicious:

"My acquaintance with John Urquhart commenced in the year 1823; but it was not till the summer of 1825 that we became very intimate. When I knew him first he appeared to possess a great flow of spirits, which showed itself more in a perpetual cheerfulness and hilarity than in any fondness for boisterous mirth. This he seemed still to retain, as far I could judge, as long as I had an opportunity of conversing with him. Occasionally, however, this gave way to excessive depression, with which he sometimes was dreadfully distressed. During these seasons he was often visited with thoughts which, to his mind, were peculiarly discouraging and terrific; such as, doubts of his being a child of God; a fear of losing his senses; and many other equally unpleasant ideas.

I have not the least doubt, however, that all these arose from physical causes, and were prognostications of that disease by which his years on earth were brought to a close.

“ In November, 1825, it was my lot to come to St. Andrew’s to study ; and I had the happiness to find myself lodged under the same roof with John Urquhart. Many a happy and delightful hour have we spent together in this room wherein I now sit ; the memory of which is still upon my mind, and it is sweet. Never has it been my lot to meet with one of so sweet, and amiable a disposition. Contented with whatever he received, I never heard him utter an angry word, or saw him wear a menace on his placid countenance. He was regular in all his habits, kind and affectionate in all his conversation with those around him ; and the estimation in which he was held by those with whom he lodged, was best testified by the heartfelt grief and honest tears with which they received the intelligence of his death. His landlady, for some weeks after, wore mourning in token of respect for his character and memory.

“ His piety was simple and unaffected ; and, at the same time, truly evangelical. Deeply sensible of his own unworthiness and guilt, he was humbled before God, and was enabled to lay hold upon him who is the Saviour from all sin. Convinced by his numerous short-comings that he had not yet arrived at perfection, he was taught to cling closer to his Redeemer, and trust in him alone. He was distinguished by a godly, jealous care over his own

heart; and was watchful against temptation. Many a time did he deny himself the indulgence of pleasures of which he was naturally fond, just because they might stand in the way of his soul's good. In prayer he peculiarly excelled. How earnest were his supplications, and how experimental his confessions, every one who has ever heard him can testify. His whole soul seemed to be engaged; and the energy of his expression sufficiently testified that what he asked, was what he indeed knew and felt himself to want.

“ His zeal for doing good was very great. You, Sir, already know with what eagerness he sacrificed every prospect of worldly advantage for the arduous and laborious office of a foreign missionary. This was the darling desire of his heart; and for the attainment of this object, he earnestly and unceasingly prayed. Every work upon christian missions, every article of missionary intelligence, he anxiously and eagerly perused. He had pondered well all that he might expect to endure; he had looked upon all the dangers and difficulties which lay before him; but his desire was not weakened, and his confidence in the promises of Jehovah was unshaken. So firm was his determination, that he actually commenced the study of Chinese, and spent many an hour of hard study on its recondite symbols. I do not know whether he continued to prosecute this study: I rather think not; as he seemed latterly to have directed his attention more to India than to China.

“ But he did not content himself with a mere

desire to do good, and with forming plans for *future* usefulness; he was also busy in doing what he could for those around him. He was much occupied with Sabbath schools, and took great delight in communicating instruction to the children by whom they were attended. It was his practice to make them read a chapter which he explained to them, and questioned them from it. All these questions he previously wrote down and studied, in order that they might be as simple and easy as possible. Indeed, he possessed a peculiar talent for speaking to children, and never failed to secure their attention. The simplicity of his addresses to them may be evinced by the surprise which some of his youthful hearers once expressed, that they should have been able to recollect all that he had said. Nor was he contented with merely speaking to the children on Sabbath-days; he made it a point to visit them regularly in their own houses, and to converse with them and their relations there. By these means he secured the confidence of the parents as well as the affection of the children, and was often enabled to speak a word in season to those with whom he met.

“ To visit the sick and the infirm was another favourite occupation of my dear brother; to every call of this kind he was ready; and many a time have I known him leave his studies to visit the bed-side of some humble sufferer. On these occasions his conversation was always of a spiritual nature, and it was always his anxious endeavour to direct the mind of the sufferer away from every

earthly confidence, unto 'the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world.' Sometimes, in these visits of love, he was kindly received; sometimes he had to endure the suspicion of having some sinister motive by which he was actuated; sometimes he met with intelligence and attention; and sometimes with ignorance and carelessness; but whatever reception he met with, he never failed to repeat his visits: so strong was his desire for the welfare and salvation of his fellow-men.

" But, while he was thus attentive to the duties of religion, he was not negligent of those studies for which he had come to this place. On the contrary, I believe there were few of his cotemporaries who studied more closely than he did: certainly, none more successfully. In only one class did he fail to distinguish himself; viz. the logic class; but this I am inclined to impute not so much to any want of ability, as to a distaste for the dull and barren speculations with which the professor of logic treats his students. His splendid appearance in the ethical class, the year following, proved what he could do; and it was certainly no small achievement to stand first in two separate competitions in a class, perhaps the most numerous and able that ever attended the prelections of a St. Andrew's ethical professor. As far as I could judge, his talent lay chiefly in the facility of acquiring languages; and in the elegance, both of thought and expression, by which his compositions were distinguished. There were several of

his cotemporaries who took a much firmer and profounder grasp of a subject; but there were few, if any, who could think so clearly, and express themselves with such perspicuity and elegance, as he was able to do. Contrary to what may be inferred from the ease and beauty of his style, his habits of composition were very laborious. Beginning from a rude and imperfect sketch, he, by degrees, filled up the parts and extended the outline. He scarcely wrote a sentence which did not cost him some labour; and consequently, composition was to him a most fatiguing, and, I may say, irksome exercise. He always set himself to it with reluctance; and, indeed, it was only by the calls of duty that he could be prevailed on to take up his pen on any subject. I have not seen all his compositions; but the best that I have seen are a series of papers on the St. Andrew's Missionary Society, printed in the St. Andrew's University Magazine, a little work conducted by some of his friends during last session; and an essay on the duty of personally engaging in the work of missions, read before the St. Andrew's Student's Missionary Society; of which he was always a distinguished friend and supporter."

These testimonies are peculiarly pleasant and satisfactory, not only as the expressions of christian and personal friendship, but as bearing evidence to his holy and exemplary conduct. In him, religion did not appear as a profession; it dwelt in him as life; it attached itself to him as

clothing. It was not a holiday, but an every-day garb, and was worn with the ease of a natural habit; not the stiffness of an assumed or foreign dress. There is one testimony more which I cannot withhold, though the name of the respected individual who bears it, has been already repeatedly introduced. No one could know him better than Dr. Chalmers; and no man was more capable of estimating his intellectual and spiritual attainments. The following document, presented to John, on leaving the university, does great honour to the heart of the professor, as well as to the talents of the student.

" St. Andrew's, April 28, 1826.

These are to certify, that Mr. John Urquhart was enrolled a regular student of moral philosophy in the United College of St. Andrew's, for the session of 1825-6; that he distinguished himself highly by his appearances while under examination, and was far the most eminent of his class, for the beauty and eloquence of his written compositions; that he possesses a very uncommon degree of taste and talent for the disquisitions of ethical science; and that altogether, he, as the fruit of great diligence, united with great powers, achieved the credit of being a first rate proficient in the lessons and doctrines of the course.

THOMAS CHALMERS.

Mr. Urquhart gained two prizes in this class; one, the first prize for an essay on The Mutual

Influences and Affinities which obtain between the Moral and Economic Condition of Society. Another, the first prize for essays read in the class during the session."

Perhaps, to some readers, it may occur to ask, Did the individual who was so successful in all his academical pursuits, take a degree at St. Andrew's? It appears he did not. If this should excite surprise, I can say in explanation, that multitudes of the best scholars at the Scotch Universities never trouble themselves about the matter; and many of those who take the degree of A. M. never use it. But as I know John was recommended to take a degree, I can account for his neglecting to follow the advice, only by referring his conduct to that instinctive and powerful aversion to human praise by which he was remarkably distinguished. One of his fellow-students who knew him well, but whose testimony I have not yet quoted, calls my attention to this feature of his character;—what he calls "his total indifference to human approbation." And he adds, "the loudest applause of his instructors and fellow-students did not seem to tell on his feelings at all. Had he been susceptible of pleasure from any distinction conferred, it must have shown when he was singled out, and eminently honoured, by such a man as Dr. Chalmers. Yet even in this case he was unmoved. His mind hardly appeared to have a thought for any thing, save the good opinion of Him who trieth the reins and hearts of

the children of men. He arrived at this heavenly-mindedness not, I am sure, by any process of acute investigation into the philosophy of our feelings, but simply by ever exercising his affections on those things which are unseen and eternal. His indifference was not the misanthropic stoicism of the philosopher, but the perfect liberty of the christian."

Whether I am correct, or not, in assigning this reason for his declining to take his degree at the university, the reader, I am sure, will rejoice with me in the evidence of the existence of such a state of mind as that which this extract describes. It is in full accordance with other testimonies, and with all my own convictions. Genuine christianity does not teach us to despise the approbation of others, or to undervalue any useful attainment which may be the object of that approbation. But when it obtains full possession of the mind, it in a great degree, dislodges those secondary motives and considerations which constitute the great principles of action in the men of the world. It does not produce meanness or servility; but it produces lowliness of mind. It not only inculcates a spirit of self-distrust and diffidence, and indifference to human glory; but in its very nature induces these dispositions. The individual who feels the charm and the power of a Saviour's love, and who attaches to his approbation all that constitutes the glory of future hope, will not be much concerned for the honours or the applause of this world. Into these views and feelings, few have

entered more fully, and even enthusiastically, than the subject of these memoirs. All his letters are illustrative of this state of mind; and his whole conduct was a living commentary on his letters.

Chap V

Previously to John's leaving St. Andrew's, a negotiation had been carried on, through Dr. Chalmers, with a family of the highest respectability, in which a tutor was required for an only son. It was finally agreed that he should occupy this situation soon after the close of his college course. This arrangement arose not out of any change in his mind respecting the work of the gospel, but was acceded to with a view to satisfy his friends, and finally to gain their consent to his becoming a missionary; and also, in the expectation of being able to promote his own improvement by retirement and study. The following extract from a letter to his mother, will explain his motives, the state of his mind, and a few other particulars :

" St. Andrew's, April 15, 1826.

My dear mother,

I am afraid I have kept you in suspense regarding my plans. I have been waiting in daily expectation of hearing something more definite respecting the situation I wrote about.

Before I heard of this situation at all, I wrote to Mr. Orme, asking his advice how I ought to proceed after this session, telling him my views

regarding missions, and particularly wishing to know the state of the Missionary Society's arrangements. I received his answer, and my father's last letter, by the same post. His advice was, to write to Mr. Arundel, making application to the society. You know this was the plan I had purposed to myself, and you may guess that I was in no small perplexity how to act. The prospect of benefiting by classes at Glasgow; my extreme youth and inexperience; and, above all, the wish to show my dear parents that I am willing to acquiesce in their wishes as far as conscience will permit, have induced me to accept of this situation. I hope the Lord has been my guide in this matter.

Accordingly, I communicated my willingness to avail myself of his kindness, to Dr. Chalmers, who wrote to Lord Rosslyn immediately. A letter has come from Lord R. to Dr. Chalmers, this morning, inclosing a letter from Colonel M. to his lordship, giving some more information respecting the place. Nothing is said about the salary. I do not expect it will be great, as my charge will be very small, and I am to have the liberty of attending classes.

I told Dr. Chalmers distinctly to state to Lord R. that I am a dissenter, and that if I am near Glasgow, I should like to attend Dr. Wardlaw, or Mr. Ewing. Perhaps this may be an objection to my settling in the family; if so, it is better to be stated now than afterwards."

Previously to his joining the family, then on a visit at Lord Rosslyn's, at Dysart House, he proposed a short missionary tour in the Highlands, along with his friend Mr. Adam; but he was taken ill in his father's house, and rendered incapable of any exertion for some weeks. While convalescent he wrote a long letter to an old fellow-student, between whom and himself appears to have subsisted a very endeared friendship. I mean Herbert Smith, Esq. of Egham, Surrey. The testimony of that gentleman to the amiable and christian character of my beloved friend, and to his high intellectual attainments, corresponds with that of all his other associates. To him John gives an account of some of the plans which had been prosecuted at St. Andrew's, during the preceding winter. In this respect it is particularly interesting, and also for the reference to the simultaneous movements in the universities.

“ Perth, May 11, 1826.

My very dear friend,

I was just going to proceed with an account of the St. Andrew's University Missionary Society, (in which you have always taken so deep an interest,) when I was compelled to leave off, through weakness.—To resume the subject then. At our first meeting we had not a very large attendance: we presented the different presents of books which had been received from yourself, Dr. Morrison, Mr. Townley, and other friends of

the missionary cause. I then read to the society that part of your very interesting letter, which directly referred to our Association; and I trust we have profited by the hints it contained. Votes of thanks were ordered to be transferred to those liberal donors who had made such valuable additions to its library. I took the responsibility of communicating to you, this expression of the society's gratitude. I am ashamed to think that it has not been communicated long, long ere now. I cannot go minutely into details. Suffice it to say, that the society has prospered even more than in the former session. We were kindly permitted to meet in the old Episcopalian Chapel. Dr. Haldane at once accepted the patronage of the society, and offered any room in St. Mary's we might think convenient, as a place of meeting. One thing I think exceedingly interesting is, that similar societies have now been formed in all the Universities of Scotland, and a kind of simultaneous movement was made this last session, towards a system of general correspondence. Might we hope that this could be extended to institutions of a similar nature, in the universities of England? In a letter from the society in the Glasgow University, they mentioned that they had had some correspondence with a missionary association in one of the colleges of America. It were very desirable (and I think it not impracticable) to see all the pious young men in our great seminaries of learning, united to each other by this great bond of christian philanthropy. Perhaps

you could do something by opening a channel of correspondence between some of the colleges in Cambridge, and the Scottish Universities. I expect to spend next winter in Glasgow. I could communicate any thing from you on this subject, to the association there, and it would immediately be circulated among the sister universities.

15th. There is a new system of religious instruction which has been attempted in St. Andrew's this last session, and which I think is a most efficient system for evangelizing large towns. The plan is very simple. We just enquired after some persons residing in different quarters of the town, who were religiously disposed. We called on these, and requested the favour of a room in their house, for a few of the neighbours to assemble in for religious purposes. We expected a little group of eight or ten persons to assemble, but were astonished to find the attendance increase in some of the stations to fifty or sixty. Many of these *never went to church*. We generally read and explained a passage of Scripture, and read some extracts from such books as we thought were most striking and useful. I have some doubt whether a layman in the Church of England could attempt this; but if the laws of the church and the state allow, I think many a christian would find ample scope for such employment in the dark places of your towns and villages. You understand, we never called it *preaching*; and accordingly Dr. Haldane gave his consent that the young men in the established church should en-

gage in the work. Churchmen and dissenters all went hand and hand, and we forgot that there was any distinction. And this must be the case more universally, ere the cause of our great Redeemer can go triumphantly forward. Tait has already begun similar meetings in Edinburgh, and some have been commenced here. I do think this a most plausible method for getting at that class of the community who do not attend the public services of the gospel. You know Dr. Chalmers's plan is a little different. Hewis has the christian philanthropist to visit every family. The great objection to this plan, in my estimation, is the difficulty of finding a sufficient number of agents. The doctor's objection to pulpit instructions, when they stand alone, is, that you are setting up a centre of attraction; this will only draw some of the people; some are not under the influence of the attracting power, and they must be dealt with in another way. You must make an aggressive movement towards them. Before setting the plan I speak of in operation, I asked Dr. Chalmers's opinion of it. He gave his decided approbation to it, although he thought the system of individual visitation a better one, if it could be accomplished. This new plan, however, he thought had a much greater efficacy than common preaching, when alone. Instead of setting up one great centre of attraction, it was like carrying about the magnet, and bringing it near the iron filings.

P. S. I am not sure where I may be this summer, but a letter addressed to my father's care, will always find me. I could have written a great deal more, but my writing is so bad that I fear when written across, it is quite unintelligible. I wish I had taken a larger sheet."

From this time I shall do little more than make John his own biographer; a journal which he began to keep more regularly and fully than formerly, with a large mass of letters, will enable me to maintain a tolerably connected narrative, without interposing many remarks of my own. To enable the reader to form some idea of his journal, I will give the first part of it almost entire; afterwards I shall intersperse a few extracts from it with his correspondence. As he lived for the most part very retired, no extraordinary incidents can be expected; but his steady and rapid advancement towards the heavenly glory is strongly marked.

"Dysart House, June 3, 1826.

My journal has now been at a stand for nearly a month, and I think I have experienced the bad effects of neglecting it. Hitherto it has been exclusively, or nearly exclusively, *literary*; and even in that point of view, extremely meagre; a mere catalogue of the number of pages read and written. May I not, with advantage, extend my plan? I think I have profited in my studies,

from taking daily account of my progress. Might not this hold 'equally in regard to other engagements? I have strong objections to the writing down of religious experiences. Perhaps I am wrong in this. My strongest objection is, the fear that these papers may meet the eye of another; and that this consideration might influence me in writing. This might prove a great source of delusion to my own soul. But still, perhaps, I am wrong. The conduct of the most eminent servants of Christ is a strong plea in favour of such journals. I am much pleased with the plan of my dear Henry Craik on this matter. I shall attempt something on his system. If I fail, it matters not. I must just relapse into my old brief summary. But to begin. What have I done last month?—Left St. Andrew's in the end of April. —Spent a fortnight at home with my relations, and my dear John Adam.—Unwell nearly all the time, and prevented by illness from an intended missionary expedition to the Highlands.—Came here about the middle of May.—Felt the dreariness of having no christian society.—Favoured with an introduction to some of the 'excellent of the earth,'—Captain Barclay, Mr. Thomson, &c. —I have studied very little since I came here: have felt *unsettled*. This is quite wrong. We should ever be ready for duty; and it is our own fault if, in all circumstances, we do not find abundance to occupy our time.

4th. Sunday evening.—Read one chapter of the Greek Testament.—Found my pupil rather

backward in his attendance on my religious instructions. Any thing connected with the service of the English Church is most relished by the family. Even the Scriptures seem most acceptable when I propose reading the *Lessons for the day*. It is right to humour these prejudices, in imitation of him who became 'all things to all men.' I have heard two very excellent discourses from Mr. Thomson and Mr. Aikenhead, respectively.—Visited a Sabbath school, and addressed the children. I have some fear that these institutions are not, in all cases, productive of the good that might be expected, for want of more efficient modes of teaching. Committing to memory what they do not understand, can profit the children very little.—My second proposal, for holding family worship with the servants, has been received with coolness, but not absolutely negatived. The Lord will open up ways of usefulness for me.—Read ninety pages of the Rev. Thomas Scott's *Life*: exceedingly interesting.

5th. A very idle day.—I find I cannot study to advantage without a *plan*. I shall lay it down as a maxim, however short time I may stay in any place, to have my hours allotted specifically to different engagements, so far as such an arrangement may be practicable. For want of this, I have lost much of the time I have spent at Dysart.—Attended a missionary prayer meeting this evening, but was in a very cold and careless frame of mind.—I have felt, for some days, as if a veil were drawn over the things of another world.

I fear I am indulging habits of sloth and luxury. In what am I *denying myself*?—Read twenty pages of Scott's Life. Was rather astonished at his idea, (expressed in the narrative written after his conversion,) that even when a Socinian his prayers were '*spiritual enough*' to find acceptance with God. Can a prayer be listened to by God, which is presumptuously offered up without any regard to the Mediator whom he has appointed? When searching after the truth, Scott read none but religious books for three years. Afterwards, he returned to general reading, and even felt a pleasure in perusing the classics, and other works of taste.—I have read since I came, four hundred pages of Godwin's History of the Commonwealth. He advocates the cause of the Puritans in their political conduct. He dislikes the pompous and persecuting spirit of the prelacy. He seems to like Presbyterianism worse, (as it then existed,) as having all the intolerance of episcopacy, without its splendour. And he gives unqualified praise to the Independents of these times, as the great champions of unrestrained liberty, civil and religious.

6th. With my pupil three hours in the forenoon.—One hour walking, and one hour bathing. This runs away with a great part of the day.—I am much pleased with my pupil at present. His disposition is amiable, and his faculties are acute. His desire for knowledge is very great. He has been amusing himself to night in *making a universe* with little balls of wax, stuck upon

pins.—I feel very thankful for a situation in many respects so agreeable as the one I occupy. But I feel I am doing little actual service to the cause of my Lord.—Read thirty pages of Scott's Life. His prayers for his relations were eminently answered.—I have felt this an encouragement to greater fervency of prayer for those who are so dear to me according to the flesh. And yet, the fact that I derive encouragement from this instance of an answer to prayer, is a proof of the weakness of my faith on the promises of God. If I sufficiently believed them, I should not need particular instances of their fulfilment, to encourage me. Can any thing be surer than the promise of God?—Finished the first volume of Godwin's Commonwealth.—Very little conversation, and that exceedingly trifling and general.—What can I do, in my present circumstances, for the good of this family? The Lord direct me!—Read two chapters of the Greek Testament.—Bed at eleven o'clock.

8th. Yesterday I was so fatigued that I wrote none in my journal; and to night I have a much better excuse for putting it off, in a very painful head-ache; but I must cultivate habits of regularity, and write something, however short.—Yesterday, I completed my eighteenth year. Hitherto hath the Lord brought me; and in spite of much wickedness and ingratitude, he continues to bless me. How little have I done! Hitherto I have made my youth an excuse for much inactivity! Will this be an excuse at the bar of God?—I have

been much troubled these some days, with abominably sinful thoughts. Lord, cleanse thou me from secret thoughts! and, O keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins!—Read part of Scott's Life. Much struck with his remarks on practical preaching, and the unpopularity to which his own system exposed him.

14th. Tennyoch Side, near Glasgow. Arrived here the night before last.—My journal was neglected yesterday, in consequence of my papers being mislaid.—Left Dysart on Saturday morning, and arrived in Leith a few hours after, where I stayed till Monday afternoon. A very unprofitable visit.—Some conversations with my kind and respected friends, Mr. and Mrs. Alexander, I remember with pleasure, but scarce any thing else of my friends, whom I had an opportunity of seeing.—I feel very comfortable here, and have much to make me thankful to the great Father of our mercies.—Although I am disappointed in one great object, (attendance on classes in Glasgow,) which I had in view on coming here, yet I trust the Lord has directed me.—May I be enabled faithfully to fulfil the important duties of my station, and to devote every moment of my time to the service of my God!—Read Shakspeare's Midsummer-Night's Dream. Never read a whole play of this great poet before. Some exquisitely fine passages; and, throughout the whole, admirably true to nature. But how much that is revolting, even to a mind so partially sanctified as mine!—Can it be right in a christian to travel over

pages filled with vain imaginations, swearing, and often gross obscenity, in order to arrive at some beautiful passage which, after all, can only gratify or improve his taste? The pearls are indeed fine, and present a great temptation; but after all, they are not worth the diving for, or at least, the ocean that covers them is too perilous to be needlessly encountered by so feeble an adventurer as I.—Read two chapters of the Greek Testament.—What a blessing that we have sublimer and purer joys than those that are afforded by the bright but transient flashes of unsanctified wit, or the glare of a powerful, yet polluted imagination!

Thursday. Rose at six.—Read one chapter of the Greek Testament.—I am engaged with my pupil four hours a day; viz. from seven to eight, and from ten to eleven, A. M.; and from one to two, and from five to six, P. M.—My books are yet in Glasgow, and this has been an excuse for idleness.—Read another play of Shakspeare's; more to disgust, and less to gratify in this, than in the last. I cannot read these plays without being injured by them.—Wrote a letter to my dear Nesbit. Received one from my dear father.—Have sat a considerable time this evening trying to make verses. Succeeded in manufacturing one stanza. I may say with the Rev. Thomas Scott, 'God has not made me a poet.' And I hope I shall profit from his observation that he was thankful for never having attempted to make himself one.

I almost despair of being able to introduce pro-

fitable conversation.—How difficult to fix that precise line of duty which timorous indecision dares not approach, and which rash unthinking zeal is sure to overstep!"

"Tennoch Side, June 30, 1826.

My very dear Craik,

This is a solitary place.—I am all alone.—The sweets of friendship, and the joys of christian fellowship, are to me now associated with the remembrance of the days that are gone. But yet, I am not alone;—God is here. And should duty 'command me to the farthest verge of the green earth, to distant barbarous shores,' *He is there* too. The 'communion of saints' is, indeed a delightful privilege; but what is it when compared with that far higher privilege which change of circumstances cannot affect: even that 'fellowship which is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.' Every shifting scene of life that passes before me convinces me more and more, that happiness has a very slight dependance on our external circumstances. They may add to it, or diminish it; but they can neither *give it*, nor *take it away*. Mere animal gratification is enjoyed nearly equally by all classes; all are equally subject to disease; and if the rich seem to enjoy more of the good things of life than others, they only *seem* to do so. Luxury has deprived them of the comforts of life, and has converted its superfluities into comfortless neces-

saries. Even intellectual happiness I believe to be more generally and equally diffused than is commonly imagined. But the truth is, there is no true happiness without the enjoyment of God's favour. How true is it, that '*His favour is life*;' for without it, life deserves not the name: it is but a living death. *Immo vero, si vivunt, qui ex corporum vinculis tamquam e carcere evolverant: vestra vero, quæ dicitur vita, mors est.* We are more highly favoured than the ancient philosopher who wrote these words. Even here we may have glimpses of the celestial happiness. *Eternal life* is begun on earth. It is true, we may not walk in the freedom of spiritual enlargement, till we have put off these vile bodies; but even within their prison-house there may be many an alleviation of our sufferings: we may be freed from those fetters that galled us sore, and deprived us even of the little freedom which the bounds of a prison-house might permit. We may be gaining new victories over *the devil, the world, and the flesh*, even while here. Let it be our earnest endeavour to maintain this holy warfare within our breasts; and while we drink freely of the fountain of life, let us not forget to present its vivifying waters to that world which is '*dead in trespasses and sins.*'

I have been looking over what I have written, and find it is not like a letter at all. But I need make no apologies to you. I am here nearly eight miles from Glasgow, and have been there

only twice. My pupil went there yesterday with the family; and as there was room for me in the carriage, I went in the morning and returned in the evening. Of course, I had not much time to see the town. I looked into the area of the college: a fine old substantial building. Their library, which was the only room I went into, does not seem to be so fine as ours. *Ours!* did I say? But you know what I mean. The cathedral is a venerable building, though somewhat disfigured by modern additions. The statue of our revered Knox stands on a neighbouring hill. Glasgow is blessed with evangelical ministers in all denominations. There is an institution I visited last night, with the plan of which I was very much pleased. It is a sort of religious coffee-room. There is a large hall, where about twenty different religious institutions hold their meetings; and a reading-room below, where the Reports and other periodical publications connected with all the religious societies of the day are to be found. A book lay on the table, for the insertion of hints or inquiries on any subject connected with the great interests of christianity. In this, I found some remarks in the hand-writing of 'our excellent Chalmers.' I have had an introduction to the nearest parish minister; but have seen very little of him yet. He told me that his church was much too small for the parish; and that he believed the greater number of his parishioners were growing up *like heathens.*"

"Tennoch Side, July 5, 1826.

My very dear Friend,

I begin to feel anxious to hear from some of you, although I believe the agreement was, that I should write first. I am here as much shut out from the world,—at least, from what was *the world* to me, as I could be in the deserts of Africa, or the islands of Japan. I write chiefly to beg you to send me a long letter; it is all of friendship I can now enjoy. You will not expect much from this wilderness. I have little to write about that can interest you. But why should I say so, when there is a theme which is ever delightful to the mind of a christian, and needs not novelty to give it interest? Yes, we have a joy which the world knows not, and which no changes in our earthly circumstances can at all impair. The dearest earthly friends may be removed from us, but there is a 'Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.' Here I have no christian friend; and sometimes my spirits sink very low when I think on other days. But these are sinful thoughts. 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.' Perhaps some path of usefulness may be pointed out to me; but at present I see little probability of doing any thing except with my pupil. I have been in Glasgow twice. I met Mr. Erskine there, as well as Mr. Ewing, &c. All are against my being a missionary; but I have heard no arguments against it that seem to me at all conclusive.

What is doing in Edinburgh? Have you any intercourse with the few St. Andrian friends that are in the great city?—Alas! for our little circle. It is now sadly broken up, and we never shall form a little circle again. One of our number is in the south of England, another in the north of Scotland, and all scattered abroad. The fragments of the little community are in Edinburgh. The '*tria*' are there; but alas! they are no longer '*juncta in uno*.* But I hope my lamentations are groundless. Have you no combinations for plans of usefulness either among yourselves, or of a more extensive nature? Something was talked of when I was in Edinburgh. Has it been accomplished? When do you go to Kirkliston? Let me hear particularly of your operations there. There will be full scope for your most strenuous exertions. Can you suggest to me any practicable scheme of usefulness? Do favour me with a long letter."

Determined not to remain idle, notwithstanding the obscurity and difficulty of his situation, after very considerable exertion, he succeeded in collecting a number of young men together, and for their benefit prepared the following very excellent address. As it fully explains the nature of the meeting which he proposed; it may suggest to some others the importance of making similar attempts, by which great good might be effected.

* He alludes to the St. Andrew's University Magazine, which had this motto.

ADDRESS

To a Society of Young Men, whom I wish to meet with me, once a week, for religious Instruction.

As I have called you together, my friends, with only a very general intimation of what we propose to do at these weekly meetings, it may be necessary before we enter on the regular exercises, briefly to explain to you the design and nature of the association which we are met this evening to form, and the motives which have induced me to attempt its formation.

You know that the age in which we live is very gloriously distinguished by the exertions which are making for the religious improvement of the whole world. In former ages, christians seem to have had so much to do in providing for their own spiritual comfort, and fleeing from the hand of the persecutor, that we cannot wonder if they thought but little of the wants of others; or, thinking of them, could do but little to relieve them. In these ages of ignorance and bigotry, the flame of christian benevolence was damped, but its fire was not wholly extinguished; and when civil and religious liberty were again restored, it burst forth with fresh and undecayed vigor, from the grasp of that oppression which had for a while restrained its energy. In these days, and in the happy

country in which we live, we see the principles of the gospel of peace left (to a certain extent at least) to their own free operation, no longer adulterated so much as formerly, by the allurements of human ambition, and no longer in any degree restrained by the threatenings of human power. You live in a neighbourhood that may remind you of other days: "*The battle of Bothwell Brig*" is not yet forgotten. May it be remembered only to inspire us with thankfulness, that we need no longer to *fight* for our religious privileges; but can each of us sit under his own vine, and his own fig-tree, none daring to make us afraid. At length men have happily begun to see that carnal weapons are altogether unfit either for the defence or the furtherance of a kingdom which is spiritual; and the happy effects of unrestrained liberty of conscience, and freedom of discussion, are universally felt and acknowledged by those who differ most widely in almost all other opinions. In these circumstances we see that spirit of christian philanthropy again awakened in the breasts of modern christians, which glowed so fervently in the hearts of the early believers. The effect of religious liberty on the revival of christian benevolence, must forcibly strike those of you who are at all acquainted with the history of philanthropy during the last fifty years.

Within that short period many institutions have been formed, most diversified indeed in their modes of operation, and in the more immediate purposes for which they are intended, but all

having for their grand and ultimate object, the glory of God, and the best interests of man. These institutions do not confine their operations to one country, or to one class of individuals. The field of their benevolent exertions extends over the whole habitable globe; and they embrace within the range of their benefits, people of almost every rank and every condition. We might enumerate among those intended for the temporal and religious improvement of our own countrymen,—Bible Societies, whose operations are also extended to other nations, but whose object is, to furnish with the word of God such as could not, or would not otherwise obtain it. Home Missionary Societies, for sending the preachers of that word to such as are without the range of an evangelical ministry. Religious Tract Societies, for breaking down religious publications into a suitable form, and furnishing them at reduced prices, to encourage an extensive circulation. And, had we time to extend our attention to those institutions which have an especial regard to the temporal welfare of our fellow-men, you know well that we might introduce a lengthened list of charitable institutions, of which not the least interesting, or the least important, are those Mechanics' Institutions which are now forming in the most populous parts of the country, and which bid fair to make the labouring classes tread upon the heels of their superiors, in the walks of science and philosophy. But our business at present is with religious institutions, and we remark, that

besides those we have mentioned, which are especially designed for those who are grown up to manhood, we have also Sabbath Schools, with all their appendages, for the religious instruction of children.

While these institutions embrace a field so vast, and a variety of character so diversified, we cannot wonder if there should be some peculiarity of disposition or circumstances to which the operations of none of them are specifically adapted. Such a peculiarity I conceive, is to be found in the case of young people of our own age. We are, generally speaking, too young to sympathise with the religious feelings of the old; and on the other hand, we are too old to submit to the discipline of institutions which are intended for the instruction of children.

When I say that we are too young to sympathise with the religious feelings of the old, let me not be misunderstood. Far be it from me to say that we are too young to feel interested in the preaching of the gospel; or even too young to unite ourselves to a christian church, and to unite in the most sublime and delightful exercises of the christian sanctuary. If there be any age more suited than another for receiving impressions of an unseen world, and boldly declaring ourselves on the Lord's side, it is surely that age when the affections are warm, the conscience not yet seared, nor the heart hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. What I mean to say is, that many of us are not yet old enough, or may not think ourselves old

enough, to talk familiarly of religion with our parents and their associates, to enter into their views, and to sympathise with their feelings. Their trials, their temptations, their besetting sins, and even their pleasures and their hopes in this life, are all different from ours. There is a reverence about age that forbids too great familiarity: we feel more at ease when talking to those of our own age: and especially on the subject of religion we feel a reserve when conversing with those who are much older than ourselves. From the conversation of the young, again, this most important subject is often banished by mutual consent, as something gloomy, or at least too serious for youth, and that may with great safety be put off to an age of greater gravity and seriousness. It thus appears that all that period of our life, when we have thrown off the habits of childhood, and have begun to think for ourselves, the important interests of eternity are too apt to be forgotten, and this important age seems to me not to be provided as it might be, with religious instruction peculiarly adapted to it. It is a period when the christian parent, or the guardian, thinks he has done all he can. He has sown the good seed of instruction in the heart; and watered it, it may be, with tears and earnest prayers; and he thinks that he may now rest from his labours; that he may now abate his watchfulness. And how frequently does it happen, that while he thus slumbers, the enemy comes and sows tares among the wheat, and the instructor looks in vain in the

character of the man, for the fruits of those admonitions which he had so carefully instilled into the mind of the boy. It is the design of this meeting, my friends, to keep you in mind of early instruction, if you have enjoyed it, or to lead your attention to it now, if you have not had the privilege of a religious education.

The period of youth is, in many respects, the most important period of our life. It is the period when we are exposed to most danger; and it is the period when the character is generally formed. The opinions then received, are generally most pertinaciously adhered to through the rest of life.

It is not when the seed lies covered in the bosom of the soil that there is the most danger from an unpropitious season, though even then the parching heat may prevent its springing, or the too copious rain may sour it in its bed. Neither is it when the plant has attained its full maturity, and has been hardened by its exposure to many a storm; but that is the period of the greatest danger when the tender germ has just left the kindly protection of the earth, and is first exposed to the rude blast and the piercing cold.

And so it is with man, who has often been compared to the flower of the field. It is not when he enjoys the protection of a father's roof, and the advantage of parental instruction, though even then, a bad system of education may ruin his after-character. Neither is it after he has been long exposed to the temptations of the world. The character has in general, by that time, been formed,

either in accordance with the practice of the world, or in opposition to these practices. The danger is then past, though it may not have been avoided. It is when the youth first goes out into the world that the danger is at its greatest: it is then that every impulse, especially if it be sinful, and therefore congenial to the mind, is apt to give a direction to the future character; and consequently, that every temptation is too apt to bring destruction along with it.

Some of you may have received a religious education, and may be well acquainted with the doctrines of the gospel. But do not presume that on this account, you are quite impregnable to the assaults of temptation, and may safely pass, without a struggle, the most critical period of life.

In some respects, the very fact of having enjoyed a religious education, makes that time more critically dangerous when you begin to enjoy it no longer. The plant that has been reared in a hot-house, and is guarded from all that could injure its infant growth, suffers more when exposed to the inclemencies of the open sky, than that which has not been so carefully nurtured.

To one whose childhood has been protected by pious parents, sin is still by nature as agreeable as it is to others, and to him it has the additional charge of novelty. To another, the wickedness of the world has been gradually made known, as his mind gradually expands; but from such an individual it is kept for a time almost secret, till at length it bursts all at once upon him. While

under pious parents, the current of temptation has been kept from rushing upon him, but it has still been flowing on. It has not been diverted from its course, it has only been dammed up. The barrier that has been raised against it cannot, however, stand for ever; it must, some time or other, give way; and the longer we have enjoyed its protection, the greater will be the torrent that shall burst upon us, when it is broken down. And if, my friends, it require an aid that is more than human, to enable us to stand against the natural stream, to preserve us against single but successive temptations; surely, when the enemy rushes in like a flood, it is the Spirit of the Lord alone that can raise up a standard against him.

Such are some of the dangers to which we are exposed from the world around us. There are others which arise from the state of our own minds. We have begun to think for ourselves, and have thrown off that servile deference to authority which influences the minds of children.

Formerly, for our parents to tell us any thing, was sufficient evidence for our believing it. We thought they could not be wrong; but we now perceive that we have a principle of reason within ourselves, by whose aid we feel that we ought to inquire into the truth of all our opinions.

Among others, our religious opinions come to be re-tried, and there are many things that may lead us, on this most important subject, to false conclusions.

Our parents had told us of the purity and per-

fection of christianity, and we fondly thought that they were living examples of that perfection which they taught us to aim at. But we have begun to discover that they are not the perfect creatures we took them to be. We thought them angels, and we find they are but men. We thought them infallible, and we find they have their errors and their weaknesses and their sins, as well as ourselves. The character of a witness materially affects his testimony; and as we have in general no ground for the religious opinions of childhood but the testimony of parents, our altered views of their characters are apt to occasion an alteration in our views of the unchanging truths which they have taught us. We so associate together their characters, and the doctrines which they delivered to us, that when we begin to think of the former as weak and imperfect, we are too apt to conclude that the latter are weak and imperfect also.

If, when we are thus beginning to mistrust our early opinions, we should hear of some who have bid fair in the christian course, falling away, it will add strength to our suspicion that the doctrines of the Bible may not be all that we thought them; and the natural aversion which we have to the truths under review, will prevent us from perceiving the fallacy of the reasoning by which we have arrived at this conclusion. When we have got thus far on the way to infidelity, the very circumstances of our having received these opinions in childhood, will seem another reason for despising them. We shall associate them with

the other fables which we then listened to with pleasure, and received with confidence; and we shall think that we believed the one for the same reason that we gave credit to the other; because of our inability to discover the gross deceits that had been palmed upon us by those who had full possession of our confidence. By a process of thinking, somewhat similar to this, we may come at last to think of the devil and of hell, as we now do of the stories of ghosts and witches, which once excited our alarm; and even to associate the inspired descriptions of heavenly glory, with gorgeous fables of streets of gold, and palaces of emerald, which we have read of in the volumes of eastern fiction.

Nor is this all an imaginary picture. God forbid that it should be the fate of any of us. But, my friends, it is too true a sketch of the feelings of not a few who have been brought up to acknowledge the gospel, but whose repeated violations of the law of God have driven them to the fearful expedient of pacifying conscience, by the rejection of that book which the Almighty has been pleased to send us as a revelation of his will; and sometimes, by the denial of the existence of the Eternal himself.

You see then, my friends, that at our time of life we are exposed from a variety of causes, to great danger: and even if we have received a religious education, it alone will not guard us from the evil that is in the world. The great question with each of us should be, "How shall a

young man cleanse his way?" The same inspired writer who proposes the question, gives us also its answer: "By taking heed thereto according to thy word." If we would take heed to our ways according to the word of God, we must know what that word is; and in order to this, we must not only read, but search the Scriptures. The study of the sacred Scriptures then, will form the chief part of the business of our meetings. As to what plan we ought to adopt in attempting this, I acknowledge to you I feel considerable difficulty. The persons whose attention I wish chiefly to engage, are not children, or I should at once decide on prescribing a passage to be committed to memory, and examining them on what had been thus prepared, with a view to interest the scholar in its meaning. But you are not children; and I wish to treat you as men. If any of yourselves have any plan to propose, I shall be glad to listen to it, and consider its merits.

In the mean time, I shall humbly propose the plan which seems to me most eligible. I shall propose a certain subject, and ask such of you as choose to search the Scriptures, for passages connected with it. These you will mark, and be prepared to read. If any difficulty occurs to any of you in the passages you meet with, I shall be glad to explain it if I can; or, if not, to take it into consideration. Remarks on the different verses may occur to me as you read, which I shall make in as plain and familiar a manner as possible. I shall study at home the same subject which you are

considering, and shall choose some passage connected with it, from which, after we have gone over your passages, I propose to deliver a *very short* address.

Let me remind you, however, that all we can do to obtain a correct knowledge of the Scriptures, and to attend to our way according to the dictates of inspired wisdom, will prove utterly vain, unless we are assisted with power from on high; unless we are enlightened by that Spirit whose office it is to take of the things of Christ, and show them unto men. The most far-sighted and acute discerners of earthly things, is a blind man with regard to divine things. Let me entreat you then, seriously and fervently, to offer up the petition we have read this evening: "Open thou mine eyes!" One word before I conclude, about the spirit we ought to manifest at these meetings. Let it be a spirit of deep humility. To know our own ignorance, and to be willing to learn from every one, are the first steps toward the acquisition of wisdom, whether earthly or heavenly. There is none of us so wise but he may learn something from the rest; and none so ignorant but we may all learn something from him. And from this let me just remark, that if any of your friends, more advanced in life, shall condescend to honour us with their presence, and to listen to our exercises, they shall always receive a hearty welcome. If they know the truth as it is in Jesus, they will rejoice to see their children seeking the way to Zion; and if they know it not, they may receive knowledge even

at this little meeting, for which they may bless God through the ages of eternity.

May I allude, before concluding, to the distressing state of our native land from the stagnation of trade? "Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?" We may depend upon it, that God does not afflict our country for nought. We may not be able to determine the cause for which these calamities have been sent, but that there is a cause we may rest assured. And what, I ask, is more likely to bring the scourge of divine vengeance upon a nation, than its own iniquities? It were well if men would listen to the voice of Providence, which now speaks so loudly in every part of our land; and that when the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, men would learn righteousness.

About this time he appears to have laboured under severe mental depression. Of the cause of this, no doubt can now be entertained. It was, doubtless, symptomatic of the insidious disease which was appointed by God to be the messenger of his dismissal. That it was cherished by the intense working of his mind, by his seclusion from that kind of society which was congenial to his feelings, and by anxiety respecting the accomplishment of his much desired object, I feel equally assured. I think it right to give the

following extract from his journal, which will explain some of the allusions in his letters.

“July 18th. Rose at seven.—Have suffered excessively to-day from mental depression, and could assign no specific cause for it. I am half-inclined to ascribe it to the immediate agency of Satan, or some of his emissaries. The Lord has been graciously pleased to restore me to tranquillity; and I remember the former part of the day as I should a terrific dream. I had the opportunity of going in the carriage to Hamilton, and was in hopes that the fresh breeze and the laughing face of nature, would dispel the gloomy darkness within my breast. But it was all in vain; the malady raged with greater violence, so as almost to make me dread real madness, and to recal to my mind a fearful night of distraction last winter. I have besought the Lord earnestly that this might depart from me; and I believe that I owe my present tranquillity to his gracious condescension in listening to my prayers. I feel, what my pride likes ill to admit, that I am a very feeble creature; weak, not only in body, but still weaker in mind. Is this a fit character for a missionary? In this work I shall soon fail, except the Lord strengthen me. But *even I* may say, ‘I can do *all things* through Christ strengthening me.’—After all, I have forced myself to go through nearly all my regular studies to-day.

Friday. Have discovered much to-night of the cursed pride, fickleness, and vanity of my heart. Did those who esteem me most, know me as I do

myself, they would abhor me. I do abhor myself. —Spent half an hour in prayer, in severe mental conflict. But even for this conviction of sin, I will be thankful. It is well to know the worst, although I fear I do not know the worst yet. ‘*Who can understand his errors?*’

I know the remedy; and, blessed be God, despair has not yet barred the way to it, although I fear, from the little effect my *supposed* application to the gospel has yet produced, that I know not how to use the remedy. The Lord can teach me. The workings of my mind have been severely painful for some days, although in very different ways. Perhaps the Lord has given me over, like his ancient servant, of whom I have been reading, to be tempted of Satan. Has the Mediator ‘prayed for me, that my faith fail not?’—I will believe that all this is for good.—May it lead me to know my own utter weakness, that so I may make the Lord my strength! Then I may say with Paul, ‘when I am weak, then am I strong.’”

“*Tennoch Side, July 17, 1826.*

My dear Trail,

I believe in regard to christian society, your circumstances very nearly resemble my own: and if, in these circumstances, you feel as keenly as I sometimes do, I know that a letter from an old companion will not be unacceptable, even though it contain ‘nothing new.’ Accept of my sincere thanks for the notes of introduction you

left for my friend and me. I was sorry that my short stay in Edinburgh permitted me to pay but a very short visit to Wellwood Lodge. A Polish missionary was staying there when I called, with whom I conversed a little. I was prevented from accompanying our friend John Adam on his missionary tour, in consequence of illness. I believe he enjoyed it very much. I am now fairly settled, within eight miles of Glasgow; removed from every christian friend who might excite and encourage me; and sometimes I acknowledge I feel very much depressed: but the Lord is ever near. If I feel so faint-hearted here, I know not how I shall endure the living solitude of a city of idolators, or the extreme dreariness of a savage desert. But, 'through Christ strengthening me I can do *all things*.' What plans of usefulness have you set on foot, since I saw you? Can you suggest any thing to me that I can accomplish here? Have you any particular plans in instructing your pupils which you can communicate, for I feel myself quite a novice in the art of teaching; and I am aware that there is no small responsibility connected with duties that have such an immense influence in forming a mind which is to exist for ever; and which, in the remotest ages of its eternity, perhaps, is to bear, in some respects, the form of that mould which was impressed on it in the earliest years of its existence. Have you been thinking more of missions? I find every body dissuades and discourages me, urging the great wants of our own country. I think I

feel the claims of our own land as strongly as some who urge them against my plans. But still this does not prevent me from feeling the immense argumentative force of the simple fact, that nothing has yet been done for heathen nations, proportional to their vast extent: and nothing to fulfil the wide command of our Lord. I have had two letters from Captain Felix, pressing on my attention the state of Ireland. By this time, our dear friend Nesbit has applied to the Scottish Missionary Society. I trust that more of our little circle will follow his example. How unfortunate are the debates about the apocryphal question! But why should I say *unfortunate*, as if they could happen without the knowledge of the great Head of the church.

18th. I have been reading the former part of my sheet, which was written last night, and find it is a very dull and careless scrawl. I wish I could send you something better; but the fact is, I have been labouring under very uncommon mental depression, which renders me unfit for doing any thing as I could wish. I have had a drive in the carriage to Hamilton to-day, and feel rather better. I know you are never troubled with this sort of affliction, and may be disposed to laugh at it; but I can assure you it is ten-fold more distressing than bodily disease. The latter, often adds to spiritual comfort; the former, generally destroys it. But I am ashamed of having said so much about my weaknesses; and assur-

edly I should not have adverted to the subject, were it not as a plea for an early communication from you. Send me something to cheer and console me. Direct me to the great objects of eternity, and stir me up to do something in the cause of the Lord. Although I am sometimes thus depressed, it is not always so. The Lord has been very kind to me since I came here. I have been *forced* to seek all my enjoyments in communion with God. It is well when we hasten after other lovers, that He who will have our whole heart, should hedge up our way. And when he leads us into the *wilderness*, and dries up many a source of what seemed *holy* enjoyment, it is often not to punish, but to bless us; to 'speak comfortably' to us. We do well, my friend, to examine whether the Lord alone be the object of our affections. When surrounded by pious friends who are ready to praise, or at least, to esteem us for our zeal in furthering the interests of religion; it is difficult to determine the nature of our motives. Those who went before our Saviour in triumph to Jerusalem, crying, Hosanna, &c. were probably afterwards found consenting to his death; and even the boldest and most devoted of his chosen few, 'forsook him and fled.' Are we ready to follow the Lord through *bad* as well as through good report? Have we ever yet been put to the trial? Have you read Samuel Rutherford's letters? I have been delighted and humbled by the perusal. How much of heaven may be enjoyed

on earth, if we will but care to seek for it! I fear that I know nothing yet of Christ, or of fellowship with him. Write very soon to your affectionate brother.

“ Tennoch Side, July 22, 1826.

My dear Anne,

Your verses pleased me much; and with what else I have seen of your first attempts at composition, lead me fondly to hope that talents have been bestowed on you, which, with due culture and persevering application, may render you, I will not say *accomplished*, for that is a vain thing, as the term is generally used; but to use an apparently humbler, yet in reality, far more honourable term, talents that may render you *useful*. I say not this to make you proud, but to humble you, and to encourage you to persevere. You know very little yet: you have much to learn. I may just hint, that in your letter I can observe a deficiency in one of the MOST REQUISITE of all literary acquisitions.—You know what I mean. But in the present case, the hurry in which your letter has evidently been written, is a sufficient excuse. I like your verses. The idea in the fourth verse, I think is truly poetical. But I would not have you aim at being a poetess, my sister. Make it an amusement if you will: or a means of acquiring correctness and facility of expression; but do not make it your AIM. The most brilliant acquirements are not the most

useful. Let me remind you, my dear Anne, that you and I are born to fill humble stations in this world; (and God be thanked it is so; the humblest are the happiest.) Do not aim, then, at any thing above your station. Do not court the society of the rich and the gay; for, *comparatively*, I may apply these terms even to the little sphere in which you move; but choose your companions from those who have the true riches of knowledge, and (if I may add a qualification you may not easily find) *sterling piety*. The *manners* of your companions should not be overlooked; and, by this expression I do not so much mean the knowledge or ready repetition of a few *kind-looking* phrases; which even the most unkind can learn; as that amiable and obliging disposition which is the politeness of the heart. In the present state of society, however, a person who wishes to be truly agreeable, will see the necessity of attending to a few of those *forms* of kindness which pass current in the world. I did not mean to write so many advices; but now that I have begun, I will plead the authority,—I will rather say, the affection of a brother, as an excuse for adding something more. Let me entreat you to cultivate *domestic virtues*. The Bible bids us not only love and obey, but also *honour* our parents. Be particularly careful to remember this, especially in regard to our dear mother, to whom your little services may now render considerable assistance. Above all, my very dear sister, let me entreat you to remember that we were not made merely to figure for a little on the stage of this

passing world. This life is but the infancy of an eternal existence; and yet, here the choice must be made that shall render all that is worth calling the life of an immortal creature, *perfectly happy*, or *perfectly wretched*. You think you know the truths of the gospel, my sister. Do you feel their influence? Do not be even too sure that you understand the message of glad tidings in the Bible. Many who now think they understand, will find hereafter that they have mistaken its meaning. But, O do remember!—it is not enough to understand. Examine whether Christ, and his atonement *alone*, be all your salvation. It is *easy to mistake*. We are never more apt to sleep the sleep of a security, from which eternal death alone will awake, than when guarded from gross temptations by protecting friends, and accustomed from infancy to correct, or at least, *seemingly* correct views of the gospel. My dear sister, as you value your happiness, beware of a misplaced hope of heaven. I do not cease to pray that the Lord would make you his own. I should think my prayers in part answered, did I know that you had been constrained to pray with *earnestness* for yourself.”

“August 2, 1826.

My very dear brother,

They say there is more pleasure in hope than in actual enjoyment; and, perhaps, this is the reason why I have not written to you sooner. You

know I used to have a great aversion to letter writing; but now that it is almost the only kind of christian intercourse that is left me, you may guess that I regard it with very different feelings. For a week past I have been cheering my solitary hours with the thought, that I was just about to unbosom freely all my feelings to my dear John Adam, (a luxury which is not the least precious privilege of true friendship,) and day after day, some little trifle has seemed a sufficient reason for putting off; while I believe the true cause of the delay has been, the desire to indulge this pleasing expectation a little longer. And now that I have sat down to write, I frankly acknowledge that I have little or nothing to say; at least, in the shape of news. I left Dysart too late to see you again in Edinburgh, whence I proceeded to this place of exile, where I have now counted five or six tardy weeks of unvaried sameness, excepting one or two visits to Glasgow, and an occasional walk to Old Monkland Manse. You know me too well to require me to tell you how I feel without a single christian friend near. The harp has been often out of tune; and sometimes I have feared that its strings were about to break, when the Lord has again tuned it to his own praise. Yes, my dear friend, I have seen much of the deceitfulness of my own heart since I came here. I thought I could leave all, and live happy in a solitary desert, for the sake of Christ. But I find that much of my happiness was drawn from cisterns, and not from the life-giving fountain. And now that the

Lord has, in mercy, broken these, to lead me to himself, I have been ready to weep as if my all were lost. I fear I have mistaken love to christians for love to Christ. I feel more reconciled to this banishment, when I think that it may be intended to wean me from earth, and to fit me more for the missionary life. I have hopes that I may be honoured to be useful to my dear pupil. He is a most interesting boy: in our daily reading of the Scriptures, he makes inquiries which delight me, and sometimes astonish me. All things are possible with God.

Monday evening. The above was written on Saturday night, and your welcome epistle was put into my hand yesterday morning. Your serious charges of carelessness might require to be more seriously met than in the above non-descript rhapsody, which you see had anticipated them; but too much of my sheet is now filled, to leave any space for apologies. I leave you to make them for me. I am rejoiced at your intention of sending a paper on missions to the Evangelical Magazine. It has a most extensive circulation. My conscience has been sorely reproaching me for my negligence on this subject. I have been partly terrified out of the idea of attempting publication, from the decided opposition *our* sentiments on this subject have met with, when I have laid them before those whom I have, from infancy, looked up to as men mighty in the Scriptures. Do not mistake me: my own convictions are by no means weakened. Every prayer deepens their impres-

sion. And at times of closer communion with God, a brighter light seems to be shed on the path before me. My own conscience must be my guide; but I have discovered so much of my own fickleness and weakness of mind, that I do fear to propose my sentiments as rules of conduct to others. Instead of being a teacher, I have need that one teach me what are 'the first principles' of the oracles of Christ. I have only begun to discover my real character; and I honestly believe that did any of my friends know me as I know myself, they would be utterly disgusted with me, and scarcely believe me a christian. But what has this to do with the subject?—Much. When I think of myself, a poor weak-minded boy; the creature of emotion, and almost the slave of circumstances, entertaining opinions different from all my friends in Christ, however strongly they are impressed on my own mind, I have great misgivings when I think of presenting them to others. I am glad to have *one*, at least, who agrees with me. Our comparison of the present generation in our land, to the Jews in the days of the apostles, is very much disliked. The supposition that we are called to imitate the apostles in going to the Gentiles, Mr. E. thinks *quite enthusiastic*. I like your plan much. It is very comprehensive. I hope it will be admitted, but I hardly *expect* it. I have *no* christian friends here; but it is all well. I am *forced* to seek closer communion with God.—Yes, forced.—How just is your idea of the *refuge*. I have been, at

times, apt to murmur at being sent here; but I am sure it is for good. I have seen practically illustrated, that man at his best estate, is altogether vanity. I have seen more of the wickedness of my own heart: but more too of the preciousness and sufficiency of the Saviour. My studies have all a bearing on the Bible; and I think I study as much here as ever I have done any where."

" August 10, 1826.

My very dear friend,

I am really ashamed of not writing sooner; and yet it has not been for want of inclination. I have been waiting for an opportunity to send; and I write this, expecting that I may be able to send it by Miss Cathcart. It is not often that a day has passed without remembering you before the Lord. Now that I have no christian friend, (indeed no friend at all) near me, I find it, indeed, a delightful exercise, to meet my brethren and sisters in the Lord at a throne of grace. You have been long a prisoner; and I am now an exile. Yes; I am indeed banished from all that I love in this world; and I sometimes think that the Lord may be thus preparing me for the trials of the missionary life, by debarring me the privilege of christian intercourse. I am often *much depressed*; and this convinces me that I have not yet given my whole heart to God. I think I can see that I have been sent here for good. The Lord often leads us into the wilderness, to speak comfortably

to us. He breaks the cisterns we have hewed out for ourselves, to lead us to the life-giving fountain. It is perhaps well for us, when communion with God is our only enjoyment; and so it is with me from necessity.

I was glad to hear that you had had some little respite, so as to be able to wait upon God in the assembly of his people. How amiable are his tabernacles! What must heaven be, where the Sabbath is eternal, and the temple is the Lord himself!—‘Yet a little while,’ (in your case a *very* little while at the longest,) ‘and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.’

I have been reading Samuel Rutherford’s letters of late, and have been much delighted with them. What advances he had made in the way of holiness! I think, in the present day, christians are apt to be content with too little. There might be more of that knowledge of God and of his Son, which is eternal life, even in this world, if we would but seek for it more earnestly. It is not enough to enter the straight gate, we must also walk in the narrow way. Sanctification is part of our salvation. And hence it is that our most gracious Father sees meet to visit his children (as you can testify) with manifold afflictions and temptations, that the trial of their faith being much more precious than that of perishable gold, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearance of Jesus Christ. I doubt not, you can testify that the furnace of affliction is a refining furnace.

My dear friend, I should value a letter from you very much. My experience in the christian life amounts to nothing more than a discovery of my wretchedness, and a *wish* for something better. I can write little to comfort you: I can only complain of short-coming. My own deadness and indifference often make me doubt whether I have yet tasted that the Lord is gracious. I know not any thing so calculated to confirm and strengthen the faith of an infant christian as the testimony of an aged saint; especially an aged sufferer who can tell that all the promises of God are yea and amen. It is true our faith should need the aid of no auxiliary evidence, when we have the promise, nay, the oath, of Him who cannot lie. But it does need it. I feel my faith often mingled with distrust. And even when I can say, 'I believe,' I have need to prefer the petition, 'Lord, help my unbelief.' If you are so much recovered as I have some reason to hope from what I have heard, perhaps you may write a few lines of encouragement to . . .

Your most affectionate brother in the Lord."

"August 15, 1826.

My dear friend,

I thank you for your kind and undeserved letter, and rejoice to hear of your attempt to illuminate the dark places of our own land. I am anxious to hear of the success of your plans. I have been led, in the very consideration of the mis-

✧ sionary question, to regard more attentively the state of our own country as to religious knowledge. It has been the increasing argument of my friends, against my intention of going to the heathen; that there is much yet to be done at home. The force of this argument I feel to a certain extent; but I find it is apt to be urged sometimes by those very persons who are slumbering on as if nothing were to be done at all. There is much to be done at home; and there is need for very vigorous exertion. There are many in this nominally christian country, who are quite ignorant of what true christianity is. This is, indeed, a dreadful thought, when we consider how many *true* christians are scattered over the land. Take the case of some deadly bodily disease, (an illustration which has been so often put,) and think how we should look upon him who could calmly sit still, and see his neighbour or his townsman drop into the jaws of death, while *he* was acquainted with a remedy whose application experience had proved to be a certain cure. Would it be an excuse for this indifference that an unaccountable prejudice existed against the remedy in question, or that it was one of the fearful symptoms of the disorder that the unhappy victim imagined himself in good health? Suppose even farther, that dispensaries were established through the land, where the medicine was distributed *gratis* to all who chose to apply. (But, alas! I almost had forgot, that in order to complete the analogy here, I must further suppose that at

many, nay, at the *greater number* of these dispensaries, a *counterfeit* drug was given for the real elixir.) Would humanity think it too much, in such circumstances, to walk from one scene of wretchedness to another; and earnestly recommend to the unhappy sufferers, the use of a specific of such sovereign virtue? Is it true that a malady is actually raging in our own land,—in our own town,—in our own neighbour's house;—it may be, in our own family;—a malady so dreadful that the whole sum of human wretchedness, in all its sad forms of bodily pain or mental anguish, can give but a faint idea of it, and is indeed, but one of its *least fearful* consequences? Is it true, I say, that we believe such a fell disorder to be raging at our very doors; and believe too, that we have discovered a sovereign antidote to its baneful influence, and yet scarce put forth a finger to administer the balm of life to our fellow-sufferers? I do think, my dear sir, that *private christians* must do more than they do, if they would stand clear of the blood of those who perish around them. They are not called to minister in public; but might they not do much in preaching the gospel *from house to house*? In the supposed case of bodily disease, would it be an excuse for indifference or neglect on the part of any one who had the means and opportunity of usefulness, that there were *physicians* in the land, whose business it was to attend to the sick? And is not the case quite parallel? I did not intend to fill my sheet in this way; but when I get into a

subject, I often find it difficult to leave it. I forget that I am writing a letter, and not an essay. I have attempted to get some people to meet with me here; but there is no village quite near; and it being harvest, it has quite failed in the mean time; but I mean to make another attempt after the harvest is over. I am confined, in the mean time, to private visiting, and *the distribution of tracts*. This I think a means of usefulness which ought to be neglected by none who would attend to the injunction,—‘In the morning sow thy seed,’ &c. I have thought a good deal of Ireland of late. It has strong claims; still I think the heathen have stronger.”

“August 16, 1826.

My dear friend,

It has not been forgetfulness or want of inclination that has kept me from writing sooner. I have often thought of writing; but I feel that the whole favour of this correspondence is on your side, for I have little to communicate that can be interesting to *you*. My only motive for troubling you with a postage, would have been the hope of eliciting a letter from you in return; and this I thought too selfish a motive to allow myself to be influenced by it. But at your request I will write to you, as the desire to comply with this will be a sufficient apology for an uninteresting letter. I am here quite retired from the world. Colonel M. sees very little company; and even with that

little, I can mix as little as I choose. I dine, *in general*, with my pupil, (at my own desire,) and spend nearly the whole day in my study. This state of seclusion has its advantages, and its disadvantages too. There is much time for the study of one's own heart, and for the contemplation of an unseen world. But the mind is apt to prey too much on itself. There is none of that reciprocal sympathy which is so delightful; which, by dividing our griefs, can almost remove our sorrow; and, by partaking our happiness, does not diminish but multiplies our joy. I have no one here who is like-minded with me; and in these circumstances, my spirits sometimes sink very low. I know this is very sinful, for God is here,—and the access to his throne is here as free as in the bosom of christian society. This, indeed, is my only enjoyment;

‘That were a grief I could not bear,
Didst Thou not hear and answer prayer;
But a prayer-hearing, answering God,
Supports me under every load.’

Sometimes, when I enjoy a nearer approach to God, I can indeed feel that the loss of christian fellowship is more than made up; but, in seasons of coldness and indifference, there is none to stir me up, and *nothing* that can give comfort. But it is well that it is so. It is well to be *compelled* to have continual recourse to a throne of grace. How sinful for a christian ever to think of despondency, with such glorious hopes and such pre-

cious promises to encourage him ! But sin will damp the most glorious hopes ; and unbelief will render unavailing the most precious promises. Perfect happiness can be attained only by the attainment of perfect holiness : while sin wars in the members, there must be a want of enjoyment. I feel that it is sin which separates between my soul and God. I am sometimes discouraged to think that I have now seemed to myself a believer for a considerable time, and yet I look in vain for a progress in holiness and likeness to God. If I have advanced at all, it has been in the discovery of my own utter worthlessness. I *do* feel more than ever, that I am poor, and miserable, and wretched, and blind, and naked. O that the Lord would discover to me more abundantly the riches of His grace, and let me feel more the presence of that Comforter who is assuredly with me, if I have not received the grace of God in vain !

I have few opportunities of usefulness here ; and this is sometimes a cause of sinful discouragement. I attempted a meeting, which failed, owing to the hurry of the harvest. I have visited most of the cottages near, and distributed tracts, in which employment my little pupil is very willing to assist me. I have discovered one house of mourning ; a family that has been much afflicted ; there is a willingness to listen to divine things. I went with a person last Sabbath, who preached on an outside stair, in one of the lanes of Glasgow. I confess that it was not without trembling, and

some degree of reluctance, that I consented to conclude the service by prayer. The people who gathered round us, I am convinced, cannot be reached in any other way. O to be willing to be counted 'the off-scouring of all things' for Christ's sake! I have seen Mr. Burnet, and have promised to take Ireland into consideration, in making up my mind as to the course of life by which I can most glorify God. I still feel the claims of the heathen to be the strongest, although some very highly respected friends here, think I might be more useful at home. I trust my only wish is, to know the will of God."

The following extracts are from various letters, written to his friend William Scott Moncrieff, in the months of July and August.

"From what you say of your friend, I suppose he has made an engagement with Mr. G. I trust it will turn out for the mutual benefit of himself and his pupils: indeed, why should I say, I trust? (which is always an expression of some degree of distrust.) We know that all things work together for the good of them that love God. I rejoice to hear of your intended return to St. Andrew's; you must stir up the embers of the flame that has been kindled. There is much to be done, my dear friend, every where, and I think every christian, however obscure, must feel in some degree with the apostle, that there is a woe pronounced against him, if he publish not the joyful

intelligence with which heaven has favoured him. It is well that death should sometimes deprive us of a familiar acquaintance, or a dear relative; for the death of thousands whom we have never seen, or at least never known, has been scarcely sufficient to prove to us, that we *may* die; and all the warnings we receive fail of practically convincing us that we *must*. How difficult to conceive the true ratio of the finite to the infinite, of this brief life to that never-ending existence into which it ushers us! And, if difficult to conceive,—oh, how difficult practically to feel it! There is something delightfully pleasing in the ‘little *while*’ (ὅσον ὅσον,) of the New Testament, if we are waiting for our Lord; but, if careless and indifferent, or afraid of his coming, how alarming the idea that ‘the Lord is at hand!’ Let us gird up the loins of our mind. Let us devote all our time to the service of our Master: ‘now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.’ Our friends are parting from us on every side, and we are scattered over the wide world. It is all well; ‘this is not your rest.’ Let our hopes rest on nothing short of heaven. It is true that the communion of the saints on earth resembles the intercourse of just men made perfect; but, oh, what a resemblance! How unlike these grovelling souls to the spirits around the throne! And these corruptible bodies how vile, compared with those immortal forms which shall be fashioned like the glorious body of the Omnipotent Sovereign of the Universe! And even our communion with God *here*, how distant, how much

interrupted by sin, or obscured by unbelief! How few, and far between, the visits of our Saviour's love, when we think of that place where they 'cease not day and night to praise him;' and where they have no need of a temple, for 'the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple thereof.' Let us hold fast our confidence, and run with patience, looking unto Jesus; and, ere a few more years have rolled over us, we shall join that 'multitude which no man can number.' "

" You could not have sent me any thing more appropriate than Stewart's Discourses on the Advent. You know me too well to need to be told how I have felt when separated from you all, and without a single individual to whom I could speak with freedom on the subjects nearest my heart. Mr. Stewart's book I have found a delightful companion. If I can guess at his peculiar views of the Redeemer's advent, through the veil of modesty which almost conceals them, I am scarcely prepared entirely to agree with him. I have been so accustomed to dwell with pleasure on those brighter times to which prophecy seems to point, that the bare possibility that the Lord may come to-day, or to-morrow, seems to blast all these delightful hopes; a multitude which no man can number, must first be gathered out of every tribe, and kindred. Still, as Mr. Stewart observes, this may be very soon accomplished. Oh, that we may be looking for, and hastening on, the coming of the day of God!"

" I have a great dislike to writing letters, but nothing gives me greater pleasure than to receive them. I guess that this is pretty nearly the case with some of my friends, and therefore a consideration of the golden rule should lead me to like the task of letter-writing better. I am most particularly anxious to hear from my friends since I came to this solitary place; and a friendly letter, always pleasing, will now be doubly sweet. The words and the looks of friendship, I cannot now enjoy. Its written communications are all that are left to me. How unthankful we are ever apt to be! What a privilege is it that we can convey our thoughts to an absent friend! Without the noble invention of writing, a few miles would separate us more effectually from our friends, than half the circumference of the globe can, possessed as we are of this wonderful medium of intercourse. But after all, epistolary correspondence is but a poor substitute for personal intercourse. We have symbols to express our thoughts, but we have no written characters that can express that peculiar vividness of impression or tenderness of feeling, which is conveyed by the eye, the features, and the very tone of voice of a present friend. The words of a letter are in some respects dead, like the characters that represent them, while the words of the friend with whom we converse, and even the ideas which these words express, seem to borrow life and loveliness from the lips and countenance that give them utterance. I have been writing several other letters to-day; and I believe that in

all of them I have been mourning over the loss of friends, and lingering on the recollections of other days. And yet I feel that it is wrong to do so. This is a world of change; and, if our affections are set on any, even the worthiest of the objects that flit before us, our happiness will be but short-lived. If we be risen with Christ, let us set our affections on things above. If we would faithfully serve our Master, we must not look for a life of ease here, or even of enjoyment; we must 'endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.' I do little else than study and walk with my pupil, who is a very interesting boy. I have only been to ride once; I went to call with Colonel M. at Lord Douglas's, but my horse ran off with me three several times; I was very thankful to have escaped safe, and have not thought it prudent to risk my life in such circumstances since. Colonel M. promises to get a pony, which I can ride, soon. Let it be our great object in our letters to provoke each other to love and to good works;—for all is trifling that does not bear directly or indirectly on eternity."

"I relish my solitude much better than I did. I am utterly confounded to think of the unnumbered mercies the Lord has heaped upon me, and on the discontented ungrateful feelings I have often indulged. I have had a long walk this evening, visiting from cottage to cottage, with the view of collecting a few young people to form a weekly meeting. Great backwardness is manifested; and

I have but faint hopes of its succeeding. I regret that I had so little christian intercourse with you, and my other friends, in Edinburgh. I find that the bustle of travelling, and the excitement of new scenes and new circumstances, have a strong tendency to destroy spirituality of mind."

A letter from his friend C. appears to have contained some intimations of a very afflicting and painful nature, respecting the workings of his mind. It produced the long letter which follows:

" My ever dear C.

Your last letter was indeed a most overwhelming letter, and did I really know any remedy for your mental distress, it were indeed cruel to have delayed so long to administer it. But I have been perplexed and confounded. I have resolved to write, and yet tremble to take up my pen. I have delayed thus long, to meditate and to pray. When the spirit of my friend was wounded, so severely wounded, I feared to take the knife into my own unskilful hand; and it seemed to me wisest to apply to the Great Physician of the soul. The more I have thought of your case, the more I feel that it is beyond the power of human relief. I have done all I can. I have entreated Him who alone can bind up the broken spirit, to send relief. He knows, from dread experience, the depths of temptation;—he has experienced the horrors of an hour, when God seemed to have forsaken him, and the Power of Darkness appeared

to rage triumphant. I write in the full hope that ere now, your darkness has been dispelled by light from above; for it is light from heaven alone, which can dispel *such* darkness. You see, I have taken a large sheet of paper at your request; but it is only because of that request: for really, I can pretend to give no consolation. I can only direct you to a higher source; but I can do so with the fullest confidence that there *you will assuredly find it.*

The metaphysics of natural religion I have studied but little; but if I can judge from that little, it seems to me, that the pretended demonstrations of the immortality of the soul and the *moral* attributes of God, are little better than proofs how profoundly and ingeniously man can *trifle*. Much solid argument may be expended in the investigation, and many an ingenious method of argumentation discovered. We may have logically refuted, or *appeared to refute*, the objections of an opponent; but when we come to retrace all the steps, we find that no lasting impression is produced; nothing satisfactory attained. Such discussions seem to me, to end in nothing more than the ingenious and well-calculated moves in a game of chess. We have had some intellectual amusement; and perhaps, too, we may have *won the game*; but *that is all*.—I have lately read the third volume of a novel, called *Tremaine*, where the arguments of Clark, &c. seem to me well condensed, and convincingly stated; but the above was my impression on perusing them. By the way, the

above is no ordinary novel; it is well worth a reading. The clear, the acute, the *matchless* Brown seems, *on this subject* a trifle. Indeed, the dark cloud of mystery which veils the spiritual world, gives us a liberty to imagine of it what we please, and a little ingenuity, is all that is necessary to *seem to prove*, what we imagine, in a region wholly unknown. The more we think, the more we are persuaded of the reality of our own fancies, as when we gaze on the shapeless masses of coal in a fire, or on the clouds of a confused sky, our imagination can picture forth the outlines of animals, or castles, or forests, or *any thing*, which seems to grow more and more distinct, the longer we gaze. But where have I wandered to? I might have told you, in one little sentence, that I felt these metaphysical reasonings to be as unsatisfactory as you do, who have dived deeper into their profundities. Let me say, however, before leaving this tantalizing subject, that I do think the *existence*, (and *if* the existence, of course the natural attributes of God,) abundantly proved by the objects around us. For this Dr. Brown says, and I think, truly, that we have not to search far amid the mysteries of nature, to find proofs; far less to tread the labyrinths of *a priori* argumentation. He who sees not a Deity in the marks of design displayed in his own body, or in many of the most familiar objects around him, will not be convinced by demonstration itself.

To leave this then. How delightful the *facts* of the gospel, and the well-accredited testimony of

an eye-witness from the world of spirits! But I know the dreadful subject which is the cause (shall I say, which *was* the cause?) of your doubts and your distress. *Millions* created for a moment's giddy pleasure; and then, an eternity of unmingled wretchedness. Ah, my friend, the argument has struck *my* mind too with overwhelming force; and its stroke has cut the deeper, edged as it has been, in my case, (I believe in yours too,) with the poignant reflection, that some whom I hold dearest '*according to the flesh,*' seem at present, to be walking on to the gulf of eternal perdition. But why should I introduce this here? *You* can sympathise with me. Oh, if there is ever a time that this proud heart can think with real delight of its own insignificance and ignorance; it is when oppressed by this awfully mysterious subject! When my mind has been darkened by presumptuous thoughts regarding the justice and mercy of the Eternal, the feeble ray of a single twinkling star has seemed like a ray of hope; and the conception of myriads of such worlds, or clusters of worlds, if it has not dispelled the darkness of the soul, has at least given the certain expectation, that *soon it WILL be dispelled*. What are we that we should fathom the counsels of the eternal and omnipotent Jehovah? 'Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?' Has not God revealed to us enough to warrant this trial of our faith, especially when the express assurance is given, that a time is coming when we shall 'know as we are known?'

After writing this long letter, I am almost

ashamed of it. I have written as if I were combating the arguments of an infidel, instead of attempting to console a christian brother, whom the adversary has been permitted to attack. It would, indeed, be cruel to heal up a cankering wound, ere it had been probed to the very bottom; but I think I am not guilty of this, when I say, that even in that most dismal letter, there are the proofs of a regenerated soul. Peter was given up to the temptations of Satan, that he might be shown his own weakness. Some of the most eminent servants of God have been left to wander even into the dreary regions of atheism for a while, as if to show their own depravity, when unassisted by divine grace. O do not talk of the *unwilling* rejection of a God! All atheists are *wilful* atheists. This I must believe, while I believe the Bible. God has had some end in view, my dear friend, in giving you up to these dreadful thoughts. I trust he will bring good out of seeming evil, and that this severe trial will lead you to lie more humbly at the foot of the cross, and to put less confidence than ever in the speculations of a bewildering philosophy. Excuse;—no, I will not say excuse,—I have spoken with the freedom of christian love. I have not half answered your letter, and yet my paper is quite full.

Remember me to our dear Nesbit, if he is still with you. The same post that brought your last, gave me the delightful news of another added to our little band of christian missionaries, our much respected Rentoul. I have had a letter to-day

from John Adam, making the very solemn proposal of joining him, in a mission to Madras; to leave this country in two years. Pray for my direction. We return to Dysart in the middle of next month, to be there for some time. I am glad of this, for here I am alone as to christian intercourse. If I were actively employed in the service of the Lord, I think I could be happy in a desert; but here I do little or nothing. In study, I have done a little: I have read the first book of Samuel in Hebrew; three books of the Anabasis of Xenophon, which seem to throw some light on the style of the New Testament. In theology, I have studied Paley's Evidences pretty carefully, and Bishop Lowth's Prelections. I have nearly finished Dr. Pye Smith's Scripture Testimony to the Messiah (a most interesting work, which I beg earnestly to recommend to your perusal,) and have just commenced Mosheim's Church History. It is late, but I can scarcely give over writing."

His friend Mr. Herbert Smith having proposed to him, to assist and co-operate with him in some plans of usefulness which he was pursuing, it produced the following letter in reply:

" Tennyson Side, August 30, 1826.

My dear friend,

If I have delayed a few days in answering your very interesting letter, you can easily guess the reason. Your proposal demanded consideration

and prayer. Did I make my own feelings the standard of my conduct, I should in all probability without hesitation, have answered your kind proposal with a hearty affirmative. Two circumstances in my present situation, have contributed not a little to depress my spirits; the want of christian society, and an exclusion from active exertion in the cause of the gospel. You can conceive then, how delightful to my imagination was the picture of a truly christian companion, co-operating with me in acts of evangelical usefulness, and exciting me to more zealous exertion. Were inclination my guide, then, you see how gladly I should have embraced your kind offer. But this would have been wrong. In forming any plan, we must not calculate on our own enjoyment merely. The christian must look to higher objects. His question must be, 'Lord, what wilt *thou* have me to do?' On considering the matter, therefore, in this light, I feel constrained, (in spite of my own longings to comply,) *for the present at least*, to decline *personally* co-operating in your interesting scheme. The difference of our religious sentiments in *a few points*, has not influenced me in the slightest degree in my decision; except in the single point that it occurred to me, that the fact not of my *being*, but of my being *called* a dissenter, might probably impede, more than your liberality may allow you to suspect, the promotion of a plan which, from its very nature, must depend a good deal for its success, on the co-operation of churchmen of all descriptions.

Had I thought of accepting, this must have made me hesitate; but as it is, other reasons have determined my opinion that it is my duty to remain in Scotland for some little time.

There is a sort of understanding, (although no positive agreement,) that I remain in Col. Morland's family for a year. I have now been nearly four months. Here I have only one pupil; and of course much time for study, which I think invaluable, as I know not how soon my opportunities of study may be past. I am particularly anxious to study closely the original Scriptures, in case of being employed in the very responsible work of translation. This reconciles me to a retirement from active exertion in the mean time, although even in that point, I hope to be able to do a little in the neighbouring cottages. I should feel it cowardly to fly from a station where God has placed me in his providence, perhaps from some gracious purpose; merely because it deprives me of some pleasures for which the Lord himself knows well how to compensate. The soldier in the camp must not murmur, because he wants the comforts of domestic happiness. To all human appearance, indeed, there is little prospect of my doing any thing here, to promote the knowledge of the truth, except through my pupil.

On the subject of missions, every prayer strengthens my purpose. I am aware of the glare of romance, which fancy may throw round the idea of christian expeditions to foreign lands; but I have tried to make due allowance for this, and have prayed that a youthful imagination might not

lead me astray. The result is, I am every day more and more convinced that my convictions in regard to this matter, are founded on Scripture. It is impossible, within the limits of a single sheet, to state the grounds of these convictions. I have written something on the subject, which I may, perhaps, have some opportunity of communicating to you in one shape or other. I have taken medical advice, and am told that my constitution is more likely to stand in a warm climate, than if it were more robust: but no definite opinion can be given on the subject. The same post which brought yours, brought a letter from our friend John Adam, announcing his intention of going to Madras in two years, and asking me to accompany him. This is at present under consideration, and my decision may affect my more immediate plans. My present plans are, 'if the Lord will,' to remain here till May or June next year, and then pay a farewell visit to my dear relations, before leaving them for ever in this life. It is a long time to look forward to next summer; but should you continue where you are, and think I could at all assist you, I may then, by the divine blessing on my studies, be able to give more efficient assistance for a month or two. In the mean time, I shall pray for your success, and perhaps you will have the kindness to let me hear soon how matters prosper."

Various friends interested in the religious welfare of Ireland, having requested him to take its claims on himself into consideration, he wrote the

following letter to the Rev. John Burnett, of Cork; which I insert, not only as a part of his history, but to show the comprehensive views he could take of a subject, and how deeply he interested himself in every thing which related to the kingdom of Christ :

“ Tennesse Side.

My dear Sir,

I have had but a short notice of this opportunity of sending. The following are the queries that occur to me at the moment :

1. What is the proportion of professed Protestants to Roman Catholics : and, what the state of religious knowledge and practice among the former ?

2. What the proportion of evangelical ministers in the church of Ireland ?

3. What the number and character of Protestant Dissenting Ministers ? I include Presbyterians of course.

4. Are any Itinerancies undertaken by resident Irish ministers ; and, to what extent ?

5. What the number and character of the Hibernian Society's agents ? Are the *readers* also *preachers* ; and, are they all pious men ? Of course, you understand me to mean, as far as our imperfect judgment can decide.

6. What is the number of the Hibernian Society's schools, and how taught ? Are the school-

masters understood to be pious men? Is religious instruction the *professed* object of these schools, or only common education?

7. Does the Hibernian society support any *preachers*; and, if so, how many? Are the *two* you mentioned, their agents?

8. Do the people manifest a willingness to hear? And can you allude, in general terms, to the success that has attended the efforts already made?

These queries will at least show you, my dear sir, how ignorant,—perhaps how *criminally* ignorant,—I am of the state of the interesting country in which you labour. I could multiply more inquiries of a similar description; but I think under these you may arrange any information your time may permit you to communicate. If any thing else should be suggested by these, and your engagements permit, you will have the goodness to mention it. I should be glad to hear *arguments* too, if any particularly present themselves. I promise solemnly to consider the matter before the Lord, and to lay it before such of my companions as I think might be fitted for the work. In the mean time, I honestly acknowledge to you that I feel the claims of other parts of the world to be stronger. I trust my only wish is, to know the will of God in this matter. I feel my ignorance, and incapacity to judge; but He leadeth the blind by a way that they know not. When you see Captain Felix, have the kindness to give him my

respects. Excuse this very hurried letter, as it gets late. The Lord bless you in your labours."

While this letter shows his willingness to submit to whatever might appear to be the will of God in regard to the field of labour, it still discovers how much his heart was set on the great object to which his life had been devoted. In the letter which follows, to Mr. Adam, he gives full scope to his feelings, and refers again to the difficulty of obtaining the consent of his friends.

"Dysart House, September 17, 1826.

My very dear John,

I dare say you expected an answer to your interesting letter long ere now; and have been attributing my silence to my wonted carelessness. But in truth, this is not the case. I was cheered with the prospect of a short visit to Perth, soon after receiving yours, and I thought it better to defer writing till I should know the mind of my friends concerning your very important proposal. My own opinion, excepting in so far as that of my friends and other circumstances might affect it, was fixed almost as soon as I read your letter. With a deep and increasing conviction of the duty of going to the heathen; and with a strong impression of the advantage, and in my case almost the necessity, of a known and a tried companion; this latter circumstance seemed to me of itself, sufficient to turn my attention to a portion

of the missionary field of which I confess, I had never before seriously thought. The language of Ruth to Naomi, is the sincere expression of my feelings, when I read your proposal. But notwithstanding this, I do not yet feel quite at liberty to seal the contract, as you express it.

On consulting my friends, I was astonished to find them even more opposed than before. There seemed to be even some disappointment that I had not by this time, abandoned the idea of being a missionary altogether. Had the impulse on my mind been a mere boyish fancy, in all probability this would have been the case, exposed as I have been to influences altogether unfavourable. But I trust there is no enthusiasm in supposing that the impression has been made by the Spirit of God, when time and meditation and prayer make it deeper and deeper. Still my relations are quite against my views. The first argument is, *weakness of constitution*. Most unfortunately, I happened to have a little cold on this visit home; and you remember I was rather unwell when you were with us. These trifling circumstances make my friends feel more confident in their argument. I confess that I have felt the force of this objection very strongly; but, after due consideration, it does not seem to me sufficiently strong to warrant the plea of inability to enter on missionary work. I consulted the physician of Colonel M's regiment on the subject. His opinion quite coincided with what I had often heard before: That no physician could predict

how any particular constitution would suit a hot climate; but, in general, persons of a *thin spare habit* were more likely to stand than those who were *stouter*. This argument, you see then, I could get over; but there is yet another, which my parents have strongly urged, and which is of so painful a nature that were you not my most intimate friend, I should not lay it before you.

* * * * *

I confess that, all along, it has weighed deeply with me, and has produced a greater willingness to submit to the wish of my friends, in putting off for a little, the final decision. But we must not be distrustful. All things are possible with God. How far ought these circumstances to weigh with me? I confess they make me hesitate to give you a decided answer, which else I should do, with all my heart, in the affirmative."

The last letter which I received from him, was dated September. He expresses himself with his accustomed affection, and unbosoms to me all his anxieties. Part of it, as well as of the preceding letter, I am obliged to withhold, from motives of delicacy, though it relates to his chief difficulty against accomplishing the acquiescence of his parents in his leaving this country.

"Dysart House, September, 1828.

My very dear sir,

I know that of late the fatigues and anxieties of public business, must have pressed on you with

more than ordinary severity; and when at home a few days ago, I heard that in addition to this, you had been visited with bodily distress. In these circumstances, it may seem presumptuous in me to encroach on your time and attention, but I trust you will forgive me. Though circumstances have separated both of us from the place where I was wont to look up to you as my pastor, where our family regarded you as one of their most intimate and most highly valued friends; yet I cannot help feeling as if these close and endearing relations subsisted between us still. When in perplexity how to act, my mind involuntarily turns to you as the person most fit to direct me; and when any affliction distresses our family, I still seem to feel that we have a claim upon your sympathy, even though I know that you are surrounded by so many who have *now* stronger claims upon your affection and your friendship. It may be wrong to feel thus; but if so, I must just repeat it. You will forgive me.

When I wrote last to you, I had the intention of offering myself to the London Missionary Society this summer. The only impediment was the opposition of my friends. I had already refused a good situation, without consulting my father. He was rather displeased. On the offer of a second, I thought it right to submit to his decision. His letter desiring me to accept, and your answer to my last letter came by the same post. I was a good deal perplexed; but at last, against my own inclination, I submitted to parental authority. I

thought this acquiescence might reconcile my parents to my ultimate design, which I still kept steadily in view. In this I am disappointed. They seem to have expected that time, and new scenes of life, would efface the impression. On a visit home, last week, I found their opposition to my leaving this country more determined than before.

* * * * *

I will never cease to hope, I will never cease to pray. These are calamities, which my remaining in this country cannot alleviate; and yet they unnerve all my fortitude in the view of parting. Tell me how far you think this trying dispensation of providence ought to weigh with me. Mr. Adam writes me, that he thinks of offering himself to the London Society, with a view to a station at Madras. I know the Directors do not give the young men their choice as to the station they are to occupy; and, indeed, it would be wrong to do so. I trust I am ready to go to any part of the world where they think I may be most useful; but still I feel that the presence of a tried and beloved friend would be a mighty stimulus to exertion, and a great solace in trials. He talks of going in two years. Did the Directors agree to such an arrangement, when should I be required to come before them? In my present situation, I have only one pupil, so that I have a few hours for study. I have applied pretty diligently to Hebrew this summer; and have studied carefully, Paley's Evidences, Dr. Pye Smith's Scripture Testimony, Bishop Lowth's Prelections. I go on with Mo-

sheim's Church History, and Horne's Introduction. We are at present at the Earl of Rosslyn's house here, where we shall continue three or four weeks. I cannot tell what my plans are at present. I am quite confused. I think I shall stay over the winter at all events, in this family, unless the Lord, by the indications of his providence, seem to point out some other path. I find Lord Rosslyn exceedingly kind and attentive. I trust the peep I have had at the pomp and luxury of the world, has tended to convince me more decidedly, that it is an unsatisfying portion. My pupil gives me great satisfaction. He has a very good mind. He is only ten years of age, and yet enters with delight into the study of astronomy: philology he is also very fond of. I have conscientiously taught him the doctrines of the gospel. His judgment approves them; and sometimes I have thought his heart was impressed. If the Lord choose him for himself, he may be eminently useful in the church. His talents, and family connexions, open the way to very high stations."

He refers in this letter to his reading, of diligence in which, abundant evidence remains among his papers. Besides attention to the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, and to his classical reading, he abridged during this summer and autumn, with great accuracy, Horne's Introduction, Paley's Evidences, Dr. Smith's Scripture Testimony to the Messiah, and Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History. That he was not inattentive to other things is also very evident.

This letter induced me to write to his father some time after, urging the necessity of no longer opposing a desire which seemed so evidently of God, and pointing out the consequences of persisting in resistance. I believe these, with other reasons, contributed to produce the desired effect; and John was satisfied that when the time came, he should no longer meet with opposition from his parents. It is gratifying to me to be able to state what must be a source of satisfaction to them now, that their resistance could have had little or no influence on the cause of his early removal. My answer to John's letter, being delayed in expectation of hearing from his father, he never received. It was written the day he died, and arrived in Glasgow on the day of his funeral. A few more letters and papers will conduct us to the closing scene.

“ Dysart House, Sept. 28, 1826.

My very dear friend,

I am covered with shame on reading your very kind letter, and especially on observing its date. I will make no apology, but simply beg you to forgive me, and not to attribute my carelessness to want of affection, or even to forgetfulness of one of my dearest friends and most highly esteemed companions.

Your letter was, indeed, a refreshing one. Affliction is a blessing; and I doubt not, that on looking back on the late trying dispensation of the

Lord towards your family, that you feel it good for you to have been afflicted. Your letter found me grovelling in the dust,—wrapt in selfishness,—and sunk in depression; brooding over my own vile-ness, and mourning the loss of privileges I had never deserved; yet regardless of the inestimable blessings which still remained. Such a letter was quite the medicine for my distempered mind. I forgot myself in sympathising with your affliction; and the deep impression which a near view of eternity has made upon you, was, I trust, in some degree communicated to myself. O how difficult to keep up a *rational* conviction of the relation between time and eternity! How does our practice give the lie to our profession!

29th. I have been here a fortnight, and am likely to remain a fortnight longer, for which I am truly thankful. Here I am surrounded with christian friends; and the value of such a privilege I feel more than ever, since I have had some experience of its loss. There is, indeed, an inexpressible heaviness in having no one like-minded. I have temptations here too, but I trust the Lord will uphold me. I am a good deal alone; but I must mingle a little with the society here: and to one accustomed to move in the humblest walks of life, the drawing-room of a peer is not the place to learn humility, or to be more deeply impressed with the realities of an unseen world. Yet, I trust this peep at the luxury and pomp of the world may be sanctified to me. In what very trifling do the votaries of fashion spend a life

which must determine their condition in that eternal state, into which time will soon usher them! Surely, man, at his best estate, is altogether vanity. I have just come from the sick bed of one of the servants, who has been ill since I was here last. He is in a very interesting state; and I trust has found comfort in looking to Jesus. I am anxious to hear of your brother's parish. I trust the Lord causes his work to prosper. I know you have been active in assisting him. Tell me the nature of your exertions. Herbert Smith was to begin when I heard from him, meetings like ours in St. Andrews. Henry Craik and John Brown have commenced them in Exeter. Did you see Henry before he left? You know he succeeded Nesbit, who will be in Edinburgh soon. John Adam means to go to Madras, probably in two years. He proposes that I accompany him. I am in considerable perplexity how to determine. Pray for me that I may not be left to do my own will. Perhaps you know that W. Alexander and W. Scott Moncrieff return to St. Andrew's this winter. What are *your* plans?

I have been a good deal depressed at the thought of my uselessness. I have done little to promote the glory of God this summer; and in study I have effected very little. My pupil gives me encouragement. I trust his mind is pretty thoroughly imbued with those precious truths of which I found him very ignorant. At times, he seems affected. The Lord deepen and preserve

these impressions. Last Saturday night I was much interested and affected by what he said. In the middle of our usual exercise, he stopped, and said very earnestly, 'eternity, Mr. Urquhart, eternity, I have had a thought of that which I never had before.' Unwilling to interrupt his feelings, I paused; and fixing his eyes on the fire, he said, in a little, with a tone of deep earnestness, 'Well, I never was impressed till now, with the necessity of believing *immediately* on the Lord Jesus Christ.' Such impressions may wear off, but I trust they will return. I am not without the hope that the Lord will raise up this child to be eminently useful in his church. He is a very original thinker, and pursues science and literature with an ardour that is not common at so early an age. I am not sure whether to address to Edinburgh or Kirkliston. I enclose this to our mutual friend W. Scott, who will know where to find you. Write soon, and be particular in telling your doings and your plans, to your ever affectionate," &c.

" *Dysart House, October 9, 1826.*

My very dear sister,

I have been long expecting to hear how my father arrived, &c. And I suppose, from this long silence, you expect me to write first. I do not remember what arrangements my father made about writing, when I saw him; but I certainly had the impression that as I had more to excite anxiety than you, I had the best claim to have my

anxiety first relieved. How did my father arrive? How are you all in regard to health? &c. How is David, the person about whom I am most anxious? These, and a thousand other such questions, I should like much to have answered. I beg that a letter may be sent *soon*, as, for aught I know, we may leave Dysart in a few days. I was much pleased with your letter, my dear Anne, and hope for a frequent renewal of the pleasure I have in hearing from you. You ask me to write to you about religion; and I believe the request proceeds from your heart; for I cannot think you would allow any motive whatever to make you trifle with sincerity on a subject of infinite importance. You know the absolute necessity of *decision* in this matter. Persons of amiable dispositions are apt to be moulded into the sentiments of those around them, almost without the consciousness that the opinions they have adopted, are not their own, and never had any solid foundation in their own judgment; and, probably, have never made any serious impression on their own heart. We must think and feel for *ourselves*, as *every one* of us shall have to answer *for himself* to God. I have nothing new to write you, my dear sister, on the subject of religion. All my little experience of a deceitful world, and a still more deceitful heart, tends only to confirm me in the belief of those grand truths which the Lord has permitted us to know from infancy. When the heart is overwhelmed with guilt, there is nothing can give comfort but the consideration that Christ

has made a full atonement; and the repeated declarations of Scripture, that if we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved. The gospel cannot be believed, till we feel that we are guilty. It is one thing to think of the death of Christ, when we have no apprehensions about our state in a future world; and a very different thing indeed to catch a glimpse of this way of escape, when justice has shut up every other avenue, and the wrath of God seems ready to burst upon the soul which feels itself to be accursed. Ay, then we can estimate, in some degree, the value of a pardon which the Son of God had to leave heaven to procure; we can then tell something of what is meant by having peace with God,—we experience the blessedness ‘of the man whose iniquities are pardoned.’ Now this guilt and exposure to the wrath of God, is not an imaginary case, into the belief of which we may work ourselves. It is the plain matter of fact. The Bible describes it most plainly as the state of every son and daughter of Adam. Why then will we shut our eyes to it, and rest secure and contented, without applying to the remedy that has been provided?

It is the great evil in letter writing, that we can scarcely enter on a subject, when we are compelled to leave it. Nothing worth notice has occurred since my father was here. I have seen a little more of the folly of the world, and have experienced more of the weakness and worthlessness of my own heart. I have written to John Adam about Madras, but have not yet received an answer.”

“ Tannoeh Side, October 26, 1826.

My dear sister,

I believe you owe me a letter; but as I am not very punctual in paying my debts in that way in general, it may perhaps atone for some long delayed epistle, to have sent *one*, at least, before it was due. I often think that my letters are too abstract to interest you, and that this discourages you from writing freely to me. I have seen parts of the country you have never visited, and have sometimes thought of sending you some descriptions of scenery, &c. But really, I have no head for description. Trees, and fields, and rivers, occur every where; and were I to tell you what I have seen in that way, it would only recal the scenes you yourself are familiar with; for I have not the *tact* of classifying and arranging these elements of natural description, so as to form any distinct picture of a particular landscape. But I have made a journey lately, where there were no trees, no fields; there was a river, indeed, beside us, but fish never swam in it; and in the air, far around, a bird had never been known to fly. After this mysterious introduction, I feel obliged to apologize for my subject. But after all, I can assure you, though you may hear people talk with great contempt of a *coal pit*, you may travel many a mile in this world of light and sunshine, without seeing any thing half so wonderful as the coal mines at Dysart. But this I should have left you to guess *after* my descrip-

tion; for I fear, after having said so, I shall fail to make you think as I say. Well, to fall upon the subject, without further preface. Having made an engagement the day before, with my good friend Mr. Barclay, who conducts the work, and who promised to equip me for the expedition, I repaired to his house early after breakfast. I found only one dress had been procured, which they insisted on giving to me. I wish you had seen us as we set out. You can fancy my slender body wrapt in a sailor's jacket and trowsers which had been made for a stout man, and crowned with an immense old hat which had an irresistible tendency to rest upon my shoulders. After half an hour's walk in this fantastic attire, during which time I afforded some merriment to the natives, and felt now and then a little hesitation on the subject of personal identity, we reached the place of descent. It is a perpendicular shaft, with a wooden partition in the middle, reaching to the bottom. On one side of this partition are placed short wooden ladders, in a zig-zag direction, from top to bottom of the pit. Having each lighted his candle, we addressed ourselves to the work of descending, and were right glad, after some fatigue and no little wariness, to find that we had reached the bottom. At this spot, we were about half a mile from the shaft where the coals are taken up. Mr. Barclay led the way with a lanthorn, and after we had followed for some time, we began to perceive that we had entered a spacious gallery: the roof about twelve feet high. By the glimmer of our

candles on the right hand, the wall seemed to be solid; but on the left, now and then appeared a spacious gloomy cavern, which seemed to turn at right angles to the rout we were pursuing, but how far we could not tell; all beyond a few yards was covered with an impenetrable darkness. To let you know more than I did when surveying these gloomy regions, we were walking in what miners call *the level*, which is excavated in a horizontal direction, (as its name imports,) in a line at right angles to the direction which the stratum dips. In this way a level channel is obtained for the water that accumulates, without passing from the vein of coal; which you will easily perceive could not be accomplished by running a mine in any other direction. In that case, if you follow the coal, you must descend with the stratum: if you keep a level, you leave the coal. The caverns on our left hand, were the *workings* which are always wrought upwards; hence we had none on our right hand. On this side, a *river* flowed, which was supplied by tributary streams that issued from the caverns I have attempted to describe, or sometimes by a water-fall, where the roof had given way. Hitherto the murmur of the stream had alone broke the dreary stillness of these caverns, and the feeble rays of our candles had only made visible the darkness they could not dissipate: but now, other sounds and sights began to burst upon us; a fire was seen blazing in the distance, and a number of motley faces, which still preserved some colours that could reflect the light, (reflected

by nothing else,) danced and gleamed before us like the figures in a magic lantern. The clanking of chains and the trampling of horses, were now distinctly heard; and a hollow sound, as of distant thunder, grumbled through the subterranean vaults, as the loaded baskets (I might almost call them waggons) were dragged along. We had now, in fact, arrived at the pit, where the coals are raised by a steam engine; and by that time, I was as much tired with my walk, as I now am in describing it. We had not yet travelled over half the ground; but as the rest of our journey was more expeditious, I hope to make the description more brief. A train of empty baskets were ready to move, in which we made very comfortable seats of straw. Our horse was harnessed, our lights adjusted, and in a few minutes we started at full trot, to explore the yet unseen recesses of this endless labyrinth. What we saw here was just what we had seen before, till we arrived, after travelling another mile, at the place where the men were at work. Here the air was very close from the smoke of their lamps, and we were glad to make our way back on loaded baskets, though contrary to the laws of those realms. We took no candles in returning, as a lamp is attached to each train of baskets. By accident, this only remaining light went out about the middle of our journey, and we were left in darkness, of which those above ground can form no conception. Our horse continued to canter along as if nothing had happened, at a rate that made it a little difficult for

me to keep my seat. In some time, a twinkling lamp again appeared in the distance, on passing which, things went on as before. The baskets we travelled in, are set on wheels which move on a rail way. The horses are in excellent condition, and have very good stables in the mine. They never see the light of day, from the time they are first lowered down. Of our return, I need not describe farther.

When you have read the above confused description, read the twenty-eighth chapter of Job, and tell me if it does not throw some light on the sublime description there. If not, I have failed to represent to you what I have seen. Man can, indeed, do much; but after all, his power is limited. He can put forth his hand upon the rocks, and overturn the mountains by the roots. He can cut out rivers among the rocks; he can bind the flood from overflowing. His eye seeth every precious thing, and the thing that is hid, he bringeth forth to light. But where shall wisdom be found?—God alone knoweth the way thereof: and Oh, let us thank him with our whole hearts, that what human skill could never have discovered, he has freely made known to us by the gospel! Man can ‘bore the solid earth;’ but the depth saith of this wisdom, it is not in me. Man can fathom the ocean, and explore its hidden caverns; but the sea saith, it is not with me. In what a pitiable condition is man, with all his boasted wisdom, without divine revelation. O how thankful

then should we be, that this precious gift, the gift of heavenly wisdom, is freely offered to all! It is easily accessible to every individual. No careful and laborious search is to be made, ere we can discover it; no difficult task to be performed, ere we can deserve it. 'Say not then in thine heart,' &c. (Read the passage, Rom. x. 8; and the parallel verses, Deut. xxx. 11—15.)

Let us embrace with eagerness and joy, the precious truths that God has revealed to us. Pardon, and reconciliation, and spiritual renovation, are the gifts that are offered. They are not to be compared in value to any earthly thing. They have been purchased by the blood of Christ, and are offered to us for nothing. O let us not then despise or neglect these invaluable gifts, which the possession of a thousand worlds could not enable us to purchase!"

The following is one of his short addresses to his class of young men, after it was formed:

AN

ADDRESS.

“Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.” &c. Prov. iii. 13—19.

It would be a very reasonable question for any of you to put to me to night, “What has been your object in calling us together?” And I think I should speak the sincere language of my heart, in answering, “My object simply is, to try to make you happy.” Could I but succeed in convincing you that this is really my design, and that I have rational expectations of accomplishing it, I know that I should secure the willing attendance, and the earnest attention of all whose circumstances do not absolutely forbid them. Every one wishes to be happy. However different may be the pursuits in which men engage, and however diversified the objects on which they set their affections, this is the great sum of their desires, and this the point to which all their efforts tend. Every one of you feels the truth of this statement. You are all seeking after happiness; and yet, were I to question each one of you on this subject, I dare say I should receive the same answer from all, That this great object of your wishes has not yet been obtained. There is still another point in

which I may venture to say, you all agree. And that is, That though you have not yet found this object of your wishes, you have the expectation that at some future period it will be obtained.—The most miserable has the *expectation*. Take it away, and you leave a man in despair.

You feel then, that at present, you are not quite happy. Many of you may feel yourselves to be very miserable. You earnestly desire to be happy; and you have some vague hope, that at some time or other, you will be so.

This is a subject then, which is interesting to all of you. It is interesting to those who are most careless and indifferent about every thing else. And yet, though a subject of such universal interest, there is perhaps no subject on which men have differed so widely. Why have we so many different characters in the world? It is just because men have such different notions of what will make them happy.

One man thinks, if he were rich, he would be happy, and he gives all his diligence to accomplish this object. He becomes rich, and in all probability, is more wretched than before. This is such a common idea, that we may be required to dwell on it a little longer. Especially in times like the present, it is most natural for him who labours hard for the pittance that barely furnishes the necessaries of life, to think that ease and plenty are all that is necessary to constitute true happiness. But you have only to come in contact with the rich, to know how different is the fact.

I have said, that I wish to make you happy, and that I have rational expectations of accomplishing it: Some, I doubt not, would think it a good proof of the sincerity of my assertions, were I able and willing to lavish among you the good things of this life. This you know to be impossible; but, were my ability and my benevolence as unbounded as this supposition would require, I should feel that I had miserably failed to fulfil the expectations which I might have excited. No; wealth does not constitute happiness. Riches cannot give peace of mind; and, without this, what avails all bodily ease and luxury?

Some again, have affected to despise wealth, and have sought for encouragement in what have been deemed more dignified pursuits. But all have proved alike unsatisfactory. There is a want,—a longing for something more, when the world has given all that it can. There is one who had tried all the means of happiness this world can afford, who gives it as the testimony of his experience, that “all is vanity and vexation of spirit.” And I believe, in the moments of sober thought, this is the feeling of every individual in looking back upon the past. All has been unsatisfying. Expectations of happiness have been cruelly disappointed: and if there have been a few hours of pleasure, they have been but few, and have often left the sting of remorse, or the bitterness of grief behind them. There may have been gleams of enjoyment, which appeared but to vanish; but any thing like lasting and satisfying

happiness, has not been experienced. And yet, with all that is unsatisfactory in the experience of the past, there is a strange delusion that still hangs over the future. In spite of experience, men will still hope to find that happiness which has hitherto deceived their expectations. We will not believe that earth cannot give it. The child looks forward to the frolics of boy-hood, and the boy to the freedom and the pleasures of youth. The youth enters on speculations of gain or ambition, and the accomplishment of these will perfect his happiness. Manhood has not brought the longed-for satisfaction, but it has not ceased to expect it. Still we will look to the future for happiness, till we have no future to look to. And often, the nearer the end approaches, the stronger is the delusion. And it is thus that many of us slumber on from childhood to grey hairs, still dreaming of an imaginary bliss, which, in spite of all experience, we will not believe to be imaginary: ever deceived, and yet ever willing to be deceived again. And it is thus, alas! that too many slumber on, pleased with the deceitful vision, till the voice of death wakes them to the dread reality.

And is there, then, no such thing as happiness? Or, if there be, how are we to find it? If riches, and honours, and fame, and learning, and pleasure, have deceived the expectations of those who trusted to them for happiness, must we give up the search? There is such a thing as true enjoyment; and there is a way of finding it, which is patent to us all. The meanest,—yea, the vilest,

have found it before us, and we need not despair. God has been pleased to "show us the path of life;" and if many have sunk to the grave without obtaining the object of their wishes, it is because they would listen to the dictates of their own depraved propensities, rather than to the voice of their Creator. O let us not imitate so sad an example! Let us turn to the Bible, and be directed by it in this most interesting of all inquiries.

He to whom I have before alluded, as having tried all earthly things and pronounced them "vanity;" while writing under the influence of the Divine Spirit, has the following words: "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom," &c. Prov. iii. 13—19. This points directly to the subject of our inquiries. It is ours, then, humbly to investigate what may be the meaning of the words, and to receive it as an intimation from Him who knoweth all things, who cannot be deceived, and who cannot lie.

It is evident that the sense of the passage depends mainly upon the meaning we give to the words "*wisdom*," and "*understanding*," (בִּינָה, חִכְמָה.) If these are to be understood in the sense in which they generally pass current among us, the passage will seem at variance with the general remarks we have made about the unsatisfactory nature of all earthly things. It is true, the pursuits of learning and science are productive of a higher and a purer pleasure, than the gross and degrading gratification of avarice or sensuality. But still there are many called wise, whose wisdom

has failed to make them happy. This, therefore, cannot be the meaning of the words. The Bible is never at variance with facts. Accordingly, we find the very author of our text, bearing witness to the unsatisfactory nature of mere earthly wisdom. (Eccles. i. 16, to the end.) If ever the wisdom of any man could afford happiness, the wisdom of the wisest must have done so. But you have heard him rank it with the other unsatisfactory vanities of earth. We are told of the uncertainty of riches; and, therefore, we are exhorted "not to labour to be rich." It is added in the same verse, "Cease from thine own wisdom." Prov. xxiii. 4.

What then is the meaning of those interesting words which form the chief ingredients of that happiness, after which all are seeking? They are not used in their ordinary sense: for, in that case, the passage would not be true, and would stand at variance with other parts of Scripture. It is always the safest way of interpreting Scripture language; and especially those phrases which are peculiar to Scripture, when we can make the divine word its own interpreter. If you turn to the twenty-eighth verse of the twenty-eighth chapter of Job, you will have a beautiful illustration of what I mean. There the very same words occur, which are found in our text, accompanied with a full and explicit explanation, "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil, is understanding." "*The fear of the Lord,*" you know, is a common expression in Scripture

for *true religion*. It indicates a feeling of the profoundest reverence, mingled with adoring love, which is the right state of mind in which a creature should regard his Creator. To be truly happy, then, we must be truly religious. The *understanding* that is mentioned, is a *departure from evil*. This too, is an ingredient of happiness, and is the consequent of the former. True happiness is inseparably connected with holiness.

You will say, This is no new discovery. We have been often told so. Aye, but have you felt it to be a truth; and have you acted upon it as a truth? If so, whatever be your sorrows, you can tell that you have a joy which the world cannot give, and which it cannot take away. If you have not this joy, you have not yet laid hold on this true wisdom. Seek for her, for happy is the man that findeth her.

It appears, then, that sin is the cause of all the misery that is in the world. There is a sense of guilt, and a dread of punishment, which the most careless sometimes feel, and which must soon burst with overwhelming force upon them in that place where conscience will be ever awake. How blessed then is he "whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered," &c. (Psalm xxxii.) This consciousness of guilt must form a great part of the unhappiness of every one, whose conscience is not seared as with a hot iron. In the gospel then there is a remedy for this. The blessedness mentioned in the Psalm may be ours, if we believe that Christ died for our sins. But the misery

arising from a sense of guilt, is not the only misery connected with sin; nor is it this which constitutes the main part of the unhappiness of mankind. An awakened conscience has driven many to despair, and the thinking part of mankind are often oppressed by the unwelcome intrusions of its warning voice. But the gay unthinking multitude, who never reflect, and who never think of futurity, — are they oppressed with a sense of guilt? They often are. And yet is it true, that many dance along from the cradle to the grave, in whom the past has excited no remorse, and the future no anxiety. And yet these were not *happy*. They roved from pleasure to pleasure, seeking what they could not obtain. Their very love of novelty, showed that the last amusement could amuse no longer. They have sunk to the grave, and they are miserable now. There is a misery then connected with sin, independent of a sense of guilt; or rather, I should say, *sin itself is misery*. It is sin which has stamped vanity on all the means of happiness which the world presents. It is sin which has mingled bitterness with every earthly pleasure. In this view of the matter, every sinner must be unhappy, and that independent of the torments of conscience, or the foreboding of torments greater still. Misery must be mingled up with his very existence, and every enjoyment must be embittered by the principle of unhappiness which is in his own breast. One of the Scripture names of the devil, means the *self-tormentor*; and the appellation is applicable, in a

certain degree, to every worker of iniquity. This is evidently the deadliest wound sin has given, but the religion of the Bible has a cure for this too.

In the gospel we are offered pardon, and this can disarm conscience and take the sting from death. But this is not all. We must be purified, as well as pardoned, ere our salvation be complete. The natural consequence of sin is punishment proportioned to the enormity of the crime: a full pardon frees us from all the overwhelming consequences of our guilt. But sin itself is a punishment; and, so long as we are sinners, no pardon, however full or free, can save us from this punishment. While we remain depraved and unholy, we must be unhappy. A change of character then is the only hope of deliverance. And for this, most ample means are provided in the gospel of Christ. The very history of that atonement which procured our pardon, has a tendency, while we meditate upon it, to promote our holiness. While we look to Christ, we are made like him. While we behold that glory with unveiled faces, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory. It is by believing in Christ therefore, and thinking much of his person and his history, that we shall find that wisdom, and get that understanding, which shall make us truly happy. For thus shall we fear the Lord, in the sense of that term; and thus too shall we be led to depart from evil.

"Dysart House, October 13, 1826.

My dear Trail,

Perhaps I should have written sooner, but I trust you will not attribute this delay to want of affection. I have really nothing particular to communicate, except my very sincere thanks for your truly kind and refreshing letter. I trust this will find you a preacher of the gospel; and I am sure, if once all external barriers are removed, the state of those around you, will constrain you to "be instant in season, out of season." You mention having heard from our dear friend Adam; and I suppose, he addressed you on the subject which has taken possession of his whole soul. Have you been thinking more of the missionary work? I feel the argument for personal engagement every day more strong; and if there are times when I have a longing persuasion that it may be my duty to remain at home, they are times when the chilling influence of the world has cooled every holy affection. This convinces me, more than any thing, that the matter is of God. Did I tell you that our friend Rentoul has been so impressed with the duty of preaching to the heathen, as to have almost (I trust, by this time, altogether) decided on offering his services to the London Missionary Society? Henry Craik has written me, since his arrival at Exeter, which place he seems to like very much. John Brown and he are making some exertion for the spiritual good of the people.

I had a letter from Mr. Adam yesterday, who seems to think of Madras as the place of his destination. I suppose he had begun to study Sanskrit when he wrote to you. He goes on with it. I could have wished much to accompany John Adam, but many circumstances seem to demand a considerable delay on my part. May the Lord make me submissive! I know his ways are the best. Generally on looking back, we can see that every step we took was necessary for our welfare, although when we took these steps, all was darkness and perplexity: "The Lord leadeth the blind by a way that they know not." It is a privilege even to be blind, if we have such a Leader.—Since we came here, the Earl of Rosslyn's family have been all at home, and there has been a good deal of company. Lord Loughborough, Lord Rosslyn's son, was married last Tuesday.

I feel that the near approach of rank and fashion has a strong, though almost imperceptible influence, in superinducing a spirit of worldliness. Every new scene that opens to me, convinces me that the world in which we live, is more dangerous than ever I imagined, and every new temptation shows me that my strength is utter weakness. How difficult to learn the lesson of our own utter worthlessness! Experience alone can teach it. O that we may be enabled to look more simply to Christ alone! In him we are complete. Through Christ strengthening us we can do all things. I thank you for your kind present, and for your still kinder advices. Pray for me that the Lord would

uphold me, for I feel that I walk on slippery places. Nesbit will be in Edinburgh soon. W. S. Moncrieff, and W. Alexander, my old companions, are the only persons I know going to St. Andrew's.

I hope they will be strenuous in their exertions. We return soon to the neighbourhood of Glasgow, where I expect to spend the winter."

"Dysart House, October 16, 1826.

My very dear friend,

I have just been conning over your very interesting letter, by way of foraging for my own pen; for I fear this will be a very barren and uninteresting letter. Every line of your epistle is filled with what is interesting; so that I scarcely know what to allude to first. The first thing that strikes me is, that the date of this letter is exactly a month later than yours, which was the time fixed for our dear Nesbit's leaving you. I trust he has left you, else I shall be denied the pleasure of an interview with him, as I pass through Edinburgh for Tennoch Side, the end of this week. But, by the way, when your letter was written, you did not know I had left that part of the country. It is now about five weeks, since Colonel M's family came to Dysart; and on leaving our former residence, I was permitted to pay a visit to Perth, which was doubly sweet to me, from having been removed for a time from all who were like-minded. One thing I was much disappointed in,—my pa-

rents showed a more determined opposition than ever to my going to the heathen. I had hoped that, by this time, they would have been quite reconciled, and I had formed my plans accordingly. I have now no plan. I am waiting till the Lord, by his providence, point out the way to me. Even my dear John Adam recommends delay in my circumstances. I fear he must leave me behind him; for, I suppose, to be qualified to go with him, even as an assistant, I should require to be in London immediately. But it is well that we should have our plans frustrated. God has marked out the way for us already, and it is very presumptuous in us to try to mark it out for ourselves. I feel that the present, is very apt to be overlooked, in laying schemes for the future; and the opportunities of usefulness that daily present themselves, are apt to be neglected in the imagination of still more favourable opportunities that are to come. This is evidently a device of Satan's. How many precepts have we in Scripture to guard us against delusion!

Since I have been here, I have seen a good deal of what is called *the world*. Lord Rosslyn's family has been at home, and there has been a good deal of company. There is a fascination about rank, and fashion, and gaiety, and splendour, which has an almost imperceptible influence, even on the heart that is conscious of their utter vanity. The smile of the world is more dangerous than its frown; and the kindness and attention of those who are called *great*, have a strong tendency

to lead away from the simplicity that is in Christ. This I have in some degree experienced.

I do not know whether I ever wrote any thing about my pupil. He is a boy of a very affectionate and amiable disposition; and if I am not mistaken, he has an intellect of no ordinary cast. But he has been quite spoiled: he has never been accustomed to obey any body, and has never been punished for a fault. Of course, you can see, in such a case, I have a good deal to try me, but yet I have encouragement too. He has been several times a good deal impressed with the doctrines of the gospel, and though these impressions may wear off again, at present they give encouragement to hope and pray that the heart which has been influenced by them, may be, sooner or later, entirely subjugated to the Lord. I rejoice to hear of your exertions in your neighbourhood. Persevere, my dear friend. I mean to renew my efforts to have a meeting near Tennyoch Side. Give my affectionate regards to John Brown. I am glad to know that, practically, he has given up his peculiar tenets. I am not in a condition for writing on Mr. Grove's pamphlet at present, as it is sometime since I read it, and I have not a copy here with me. I feel in a very peculiar manner towards Mr. Grove though I have never seen him. I would travel a good way to meet with him. Give him my respectful and affectionate compliments. I will not send any expression of affectionate regard for my dear Nesbit, for I indulge a hope of seeing him in Edinburgh. I like the

general outline of the Hamiltonian system very much. I have adopted it so far in Hebrew, as to take all the assistance I can from our English translation, at the same time examining the grammatical structure of each word. Pray for me, my dear brother. I have need of your prayers, for I am in a very cold and lifeless state. Ever, my dearest Henry, yours most affectionately."

"Tennoch Side, Nov. 16, 1826.

My dearest friend,

For some time back, I have *every day* been thinking of answering your very kind letter. I had actually sat down some days ago, but finding I had nothing of importance to communicate, I felt unwilling to break, without a cause, upon your very valuable time. But I cannot resist the pleasure of conversing with you for a little, for it is now some time since I have talked with a christian friend.

You know I have been a wanderer since I wrote to you, and perhaps it may amuse you to give some account of myself. But I have such a memory. I had forgot that I had written to you from Dysart. In passing through Edinburgh, I saw Scott, and Tait, and Alexander, of whom the last alone has returned to St. Andrew's. I have heard that Rentoul intended going but not from himself. Alas, poor St. Andrews! I am anxiously expecting a letter from Alexander. Craik left Edinburgh without giving any account

of the Missionary Society's book, which he had as secretary; and I had great difficulty in compelling Alexander to write about it. By the way, I have heard Duff is returned. I trust he will be staunch and zealous. I mean to write to him soon.

I am back to my hermitage; and have been here for three weeks. All around is more dreary now than ever; and, in other respects, external circumstances are no better than they were; and yet I know nothing of that strange dejection which pressed so heavy on me before. I wish you would destroy any thing I wrote to you then; as, if I wrote as I felt, I must have appeared to you little other than a fool or a madman. I cannot help thinking, on looking back, that I was afflicted with a lighter species of the most dreadful malady that can visit a rational being. I do in earnest thank the Lord that I now enjoy not only health of body, but that little valued but highly precious blessing, soundness of mind. I cannot say that the advice of your last letter did not damp me a little. But you are right: I must wait till the Lord direct me. If you must go without me, I think I can bear it. All my experience tells me that I want a tried friend to lean upon; (a sentiment, by the way, which you strangely misinterpreted in a letter to Scott;) and such I hoped you might be to me. But I see my error: I must lean upon Christ. I am more convinced than ever that happiness depends little on what is without. Oh, for a closer walk with God! for this alone, in any circumstances, can give true enjoyment. I

have seen a good deal of the gaiety of the world since I saw you. It is all vanity. I have learned that lords and ladies are just men and women. It is probable that we return to Lord Rosslyn's at Christmas, to remain some time;—so you see I am quite a pilgrim: 'We have no abiding city here.' That reminds me of a delightful month at Homerton, and of many a change since."

" Tennoch Side, November, 1826.

My dear friend,

I trust you continue to enjoy, in some degree, the measure of health and freedom from pain, which you did when I last had the pleasure of seeing you. But the uncomfortable weather we have had for some time, almost forbids me to think so. Which ever way it is, I know that you refer it to the Lord, who doth all things well. It is in kindness that He afflicts, and it is in kindness too, that He sometimes gives a short respite from suffering. Perhaps it is in such seasons that the benefit of affliction is most felt. In the midst of severe distress, the most serene mind must be agitated; and it is difficult to feel that the Lord afflicts, because He loves us. In such circumstances David was beginning to fear that the Lord had forsaken him; it was only by escaping from himself, as it were, that he could find comfort. 'This is my infirmity,' said he, 'I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High;' or, as some translate it, 'the *change* of the right

hand of the Most High,' that is, his varied dispensations in dealing with his people. But when severer suffering is for a while removed, there is often a holy calmness that pervades the soul, and the remaining affliction, instead of ruffling the mind as before, has a soothing influence; and, like the exercise of fasting, melts the whole soul into willing submission to the divine will. It is with bodily affliction, in some respects, as it is with the diseases of the mind,

•

‘When the wounds of woe are healing,

When the heart is all resigned;

’Tis the solemn feast of feeling,

’Tis the Sabbath of the mind.’

This sacred repose I am sure you have often felt, and have thought the trouble well worth the bearing, which yielded such peaceable fruits. Such seasons are the earnest of that rest which remaineth for the people of God. It is an acquiescence in the divine will, that causes this holy calm within the breast. How sweet and sacred must that ‘rest’ be, which remaineth for us! Then all the dispensations of God will have wrought together in producing *perfect resignation* to the will of our heavenly Father. Surely this must be perfect peace. Let us welcome, then, all that fits us for such a state of holy enjoyment. *All things* work together for our own good. You will excuse me for writing on a subject of which I may be supposed to know little. True, I have had little bodily affliction; but I have not lived eighteen years in such a world, without tasting the

bitterness of sorrow. You know some trials that have pressed heavily upon me. You have been long severely afflicted, and if any thing I can write can suggest any consolation, I shall esteem it a high honour to have been permitted to minister to one of the saints."

" Tennoch Side, November 30, 1826.

My dear Trail,

The important subject of your letter has been much in my thoughts, and often in my prayers since I received it. I have felt reluctance to write, from a feeling of the deep responsibility of influencing you in so momentous a matter, and from consciousness of utter unfitness for the task you impose on me. On many accounts I am not the person to advise you. The book of Providence is often difficult to interpret, and I will not pretend to offer an opinion on the particular passage of it you have laid before me in your own history. We do well to remember, however, that the devil can quote from this declaration of the divine will, as well as from his written word, to give effect and plausibility to his temptations. Perhaps we can never be sure that we interpret the divine Providence aright, in deciding a doubtful question of duty, except when the mind has been duly exercised by prayer, in regard to the subject connected with the particular event, or chain of events under consideration. If the mind thus prepared has a particular bent, which is

favoured or not opposed by external circumstances, I think in such a case we have rational grounds for supposing that prayer has been answered, and the desired direction has been given. Since supernatural communications have ceased, I see not how prayer can be otherwise answered. And there is no scope for the working of enthusiasm in obeying this inward impulse, when we limit it by the declarations of Scripture, and confine it to those points of conduct which, as you observe, are left undetermined by the Sacred Word. This is the course you have pursued, I doubt not. It is the course I have tried to pursue. The Lord will direct us, my dear Trail. He who has made the path plain hitherto, will direct us still. I am tired of laying plans, they have been so often frustrated. After all, I see that I have been ever too anxious about the future, and all such anxiety is useless, for the Lord will lead the blind by a way that they know not.

My views with regard to missions, are still much the same. The gospel is for mankind, for the world; and why should one little island contain *nearly all* the messengers of peace? The little success in some parts is no discouragement, nor does it even show that men had run where they were not sent. Remember the first attempts in Otaheite. Consider the continent of Asia. John Adam remains in London, preparing, I suppose, for India. I say nothing of Rentoul, as I hope you have met him at St. Andrew's; if so, remember me very affectionately to him, also to

Duff, and W. Alexander. Craik and Brown remain in Scotland. I have not yet heard of Nesbit's arrival in Scotland. I am anxious to hear how matters go on in St. Andrew's this winter."

He wrote the following paper in the month of November: it was inserted in the *Christian Herald*, a periodical work published in Edinburgh.

ON

FICTION

AS A

MEDIUM OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

Every age has its prevailing taste. And if we may judge of the mental appetite as we do of that of the body,—from the food that is most relished by it; we should say that, at present, novelty is the rage of the day. Whether we examine the tables of our drawing-rooms, or the shelves of our humblest circulating libraries, we find the greater proportion of the books,—and perhaps nearly all those that bear the marks of frequent perusal,—to be works of fiction. Nor is this to be wondered at. We have arrived almost at that state of intellectual luxury which characterised the Athenians when Paul visited their famous city. And it is

just what might be expected, if the description given of them be applicable to our own countrymen in the present day. But we confess it does surprise, and in some degree alarm us, to find that this love of coloured fiction, in preference to sober fact, has infected the christian part of our community too, and has exerted so wide an influence on the character of our religious publications.

We know that religious tales have been written by persons of eminent piety, and with the best of motives. We have even heard that real spiritual benefit has been obtained by the perusal of them. But allowing all this to be true, there is still room for the question, *What is the tendency of such productions?*

There is a general objection to common novels, that they give false views of the world; and the same thing may be said of all works of fiction. The sketches of christian character contained in these religious tales, have no counterpart among living christians.

It seems, indeed, essential to the nature of fiction, that every thing should be overdone. Truth stamps a worth upon other productions, which must be made up here by something else. The volumes of Hume or Robertson are held in estimation as histories; but they would make but a sorry figure as novels.

Now if this be true, here is a very serious evil in the works we are considering. Truth is wanting, and the judgment cannot be interested. To make up for this, the fancy must be entertained;

and this is generally effected by over-wrought descriptions, and unlikely coincidences. What must be the effect of this on the mind of an unbeliever? He reads the lovely description, and he admires the picture. He turns to the world of reality around him, and sees nothing like it. And the too plausible conclusion is, "Well, if this be christianity, these people, after all, are not what they pretend to be."

Equally pernicious must be the influence of this ideal perfection of christian character on the mind of a young disciple. He who has formed his notions of christian society from the New Testament, will be prepared for the trials he may meet with, in his intercourse with christian brethren, and in his fellowship with a christian church. He will lament that good men should differ in some of their opinions; and that sometimes there should spring from this, debates and strifes that are most unseemly. But he will not be stumbled by it: for he has read of a "contention so sharp" between two most eminent evangelists, that it caused their separation. He will be grieved that the love of many should wax cold; but he will be prepared to expect it. It will distress him much, if the faith of some be overthrown, who seemed to be the people of God. Still he will not be stumbled. He knows that there were similar declensions even among the first disciples, who professed the name of Jesus, at the peril of their lives. And in the midst of all these discouragements he will be sustained by

the consideration, " Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure."

Not so he who has overlooked the salutary lessons of these instructive facts, and has gathered his ideas of the religious world from the pages of some interesting fiction. When he comes in contact with realities, the beautiful vision that delighted him, must vanish. Disappointments and discouragements will come thick upon him. His zeal must be damped, and his ardour quenched, and in all human probability his faith will be shaken.

It is a still stronger objection to works of fiction, that they place their reader in an ideal world, where he can enjoy the luxury of tender or sublime emotions, without undergoing the toil and the self-denial which are inseparable from the conduct that usually produces such feelings. He forgets his own character, and identifies himself with the hero of the story. And if he but succeed in *supposing* the generous or benevolent deeds of this character to be his own; he succeeds to a certain degree in *actually appropriating* to himself the feelings which spring from such actions.

It is a strange paradox that men of the basest and most grovelling characters can sympathise with such feelings. It is strange, indeed, that a man who can be ravished with the beauties of nature, should be capable of turning from the elevating contemplation of the works of God to the gratification of his grossest appetites. And yet such characters are to be found. The lives of

some of our most illustrious poets furnish us with too conspicuous examples. The readers of fiction present us with a similar paradox; and the explanation in both cases is the same. The poet, in his phrensy, forgets for a while the real world, and forgets his own real character; and so does the reader of fiction, though in a less degree. The only difference is, that the novelist does for his reader what the poet does for himself. The truth is, that the class of feelings to which we allude, are highly productive of pleasure; and no wonder that even the vicious love to indulge in them, when they can do so at a cheaper price than virtue. In a region of fancy such emotions can be cheaply purchased, and hence the universal charm of novels. Even the miser can dissolve in tenderness over a tale of suffering, when he knows that his gold is safe. And the narrowest spirit can dilate with generosity, if self-interest be not at stake. And finally, the most degraded profligate can admire and sympathise with virtue, if his vicious passions may still be gratified. Let any one who wishes for an exemplification of these remarks, read Rousseau's eulogium on the character of Jesus Christ.

These general remarks, we think, are quite applicable to the religious novels of the day. We have not alluded to the pernicious principles contained in common novels: our observations have a regard to those qualities alone that are common to all works of fiction. Now it is indeed a serious evil if, by the process we have described, those

delightful emotions which attend the deeds of philanthropy, can be *stolen* without paying their fair price in benevolent actions. But it is an evil more serious still, if, in this way, we can work ourselves into a state of sentimental excitement, and mistake this for that hallowed ecstasy which the faith of the gospel can alone afford. A mistake here is fatal, and we cannot help thinking that the class of publications we refer to, make such a mistake easy. If an unknown author may be allowed to refer to his own experience, he can well remember perusing with intense delight, the fascinating pages of "No Fiction," and giving the sympathy of his tears to some of its affecting passages, when his whole soul was in direct opposition to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

There are many who look upon evangelical christianity as a beautiful system, and who can delight to contemplate it, so long as it interferes not with *them*. They consider an eloquent sermon as a high intellectual treat. If ever they are offended with the preacher, or his doctrine, it is, when conscience whispers that this *may be* all a reality, and may have an influence on their own destinies. The preacher is to them "as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well upon an instrument." Give such persons religion dressed up in the form of a fiction, and it is just the thing they want. The song which charmed them remains in all its loveliness; and the truth which excited their alarm, is alarming no longer, when so closely wrapped with what is known to be fictitious.

If we may be allowed to add a single remark to a discussion already too lengthened, we would observe, that the style of the inspired writers seems to pronounce tacit condemnation on these high coloured and overstrained productions. They have surely adopted the best method of conveying instruction, who had all resources within their power, and almighty wisdom to direct their choice. Their method is a recital of *naked facts*. Here is no embellishment, no impassioned description, although the facts related are the most wonderful, and the most affecting, which our earth has witnessed. They wished that the convictions of their readers should rest on *facts*, and that their feelings too should be excited by *facts*.*

The artist or the novelist may set before our imaginations the circumstances of the Redeemer's death, much more impressively than any of the evangelists have done. We may gaze upon the crucifix and weep; but our tears will not be tears of repentance. And our indignation may burn against the prosecutors of one so meek and so benevolent, while we continue more attached than ever, to those sins that nailed the Lord of glory to the tree. It is the simple *fact* that the Son of God died for our sins; as that fact illustrates the divine character; which can make us abhor the sin we gloried in, and gladly suffer for the truth we once despised.

* We trust we shall not be understood as speaking against earnest appeals founded on these facts.

While we have so rich a store of facts, it is surely unwise to resort to fiction. We will venture to say, that one judicious volume of christian biography has been of more service to the cause of truth, than all the religious tales, or stories "*founded on fact*," that have ever issued from the press.

The following fragment, on a most important subject, appears to have been written about this time. I deeply regret that it is but a fragment, because the very happy mode of illustrating the subject which belongs to the first part of the paper, would have, no doubt, ended in an admirable illustration of the doctrine, had he lived to complete it:

ON THE
OMNIPRESENCE AND OMNISCIENCE
OF GOD.

When we have offended a fellow man and wish to escape his anger, the first thought that occurs, is, to flee from his presence. We know that his observation is limited to one little spot; and that any where else, we are safe.

Imagine, however, that such an individual possessed an active band of emissaries, scattered over a large extent of territory, with whom he can maintain an easy communication; or, that he himself is able to move with immense velocity in whatever direction he may please; and you can see how difficult it would be to escape from his presence. A well-regulated police will give some idea of this. Let an offender escape whither he will, a description of his person, with a warrant to apprehend him, is there before him. Suppose such a system perfect, and that all its operations are performed, not by numerous agents, but by one individual, possessed of the power of moving with the rapidity of lightning if you will, still this would afford but a poor conception of what is meant by omnipresence.

Flight would no longer be a means of escape: but concealment might. The eye of man cannot pierce the darkness; nor can he guess the design that is formed in secret. And, however swift his motions, and minute his observations, some lurking place might still be found, which the most exquisite scrutiny could not discover. The bare possibility of escape would be thus afforded, and that is all. But there is no such possibility of escape from God. "If we ascend up into heaven," &c. It is not by any change of place that God meets us wherever we turn. However difficult may be the conception, he is present every where. He fills heaven and earth with his presence. No wonder that David exclaimed, on contemplating

the omnipresence of the Deity,—“ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me.” Psalm cxxxix. 15. If we wish to do any thing in secret, it is the presence of a sentient being that we dislike; and the more acute and piercing his senses, the more would we avoid his presence. The mental and moral character of an individual is also a matter of importance. Thus darkness suspends the power of one of the human senses. Hence men may commit crime in the dark, which they would blush to perform in open day. And, in some instances, the presence of the inferior animals would be a matter of indifference, when the presence of human beings, especially of one esteemed for his virtues, would be felt as a most distressing intrusion.—Now think of these remarks in their application to God!

“ The darkness and the light are both alike to him.” And, if we speak of a lurking place, behold, “ hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering. All things are naked and open,” &c. And the almighty Being of whom these things are affirmed, is a Being of unspotted purity.

Could a human being thus force himself on our bodily presence at all times, and in all circumstances, there would yet remain to us one retreat, whose secrets, without our consent, no human scrutiny might discover. Man may drive us from every other hiding place, but he cannot come, unbidden, into the secret place of the soul. He may mark all our words and actions but our thoughts; his most keen-sighted penetration fails him there. The torture may be employed to force

the will, and compel us to reveal what is passing within us. But in some cases of firm hardihood, the tyrant has found even his tortures ineffectual. There have been minds which refused to bend, though the body was broken on the torturing wheel. But there is no such repeal from the all-knowing Deity. It is his high prerogative to know the thoughts, and to try the views, of the children of men. Think then of that Almighty Presence which is with us wherever we go. Think of that all-seeing eye which not only can pierce the thickest darkness, and lay open the most secret hiding place; but which, without the medium of any thing material, can gaze upon the naked soul, and tell the unuttered thoughts that are rising and passing within us.

There is still another way in which we may sometimes escape the anger of a fellow-man. If we can but avoid him for a season, we know that time will erase the remembrance of the offence, or at least, it will mitigate the fury of his passion. Thus Esau, who sought to kill his brother Jacob, received him, after the lapse of years, with cordial affection. But it is not so with God. "He is not a man that he should repent."

God is present throughout space: in the world of mind, as well as the world of matter. He is present also throughout all duration: throughout time; throughout eternity.

The former was a difficult conception. This is still more so, and language fails to express it. It may be an easier way of conceiving the idea,

to say, that all the past, and all the future, are to Him as the present, "Known unto him," &c. Hebrews iv. 6. It was some such conception that the philosophers had, who spoke of the *Eternal now*. Neither matter, nor spirit, nor duration itself, can remove us from this omnipresent God.

Hitherto we have been labouring to get some conception of the idea expressed by the term omnipresence.

Let us consider what effect it should produce on our minds, to know that God is omniscient and omnipresent.

In the illustration we set out with, we supposed the case of one endeavouring to escape the anger of the man whom he had offended. How terrible is the anger of an adversary who is omnipresent! On the contrary, how delightful the thought of a Friend who never leaves us! Now, how do we regard Him who alone possesses this wondrous attribute? Is God our friend, or do we think of him only as our enemy? Alas, too many think of him merely as the destroyer of their pleasures, and the punisher of their sins! They would fain flee from his presence, but they cannot. The full impression of his omnipresence would be perfect misery. This they can, in some degree, avoid, if not by escaping from his presence, by banishing Him from their thoughts. The idea of God is an idea of pain. No wonder then, if they can command the direction of their own minds, that we can say concerning them, "God is not in all their

thoughts." But it will not be so always. There are cases in which conscience, roused by a deed of uncommon atrocity, and ever awake, has given some impression of an ever-present God. The murderer may flee from the scenes where he did the horrid deed; but they will not leave his thoughts; asleep or awake, the sword of justice will be seen hanging over him; and, in many cases, he has been known to seek the hand of the avenger, to try if death would give relief from an existence of unmingled wretchedness. O what is the misery of those who have lifted up their eyes in hell! There conscience cannot slumber. There the unwelcome idea of a God of unrelenting justice, can be banished from the thoughts no longer.

* * * * *

chap VI.

The time now drew nigh, when my beloved friend was to be removed from this delusive and suffering world, to "the unsuffering kingdom" of his adorable Lord. For that state of ineffable bliss, he had been for a considerable time preparing, under the discipline of Providence and the sanctifying grace of the Redeemer. In knowledge, he had far outstripped his equals of his own age; in zeal and devotedness, he occupied the front rank of a chosen band of youthful associates; and in the feelings and exercises of humility, he lay lower than the lowest. The measure of his

spiritual stature was now completed, and the full reward of glory was made ready for him, by Him whom he loved. I feel myself incapable of describing the closing scenes, and shall therefore leave them, in a great measure, to be told by others.

morbid depression

From a child he gave evidence of possessing a constitution of peculiar delicacy, which was therefore liable to be affected, both mentally and physically, by many causes which do not operate powerfully on persons of a robust and hardy temperament. The symptoms of ~~hypochondriasis~~, which appeared during the summer of 1826, were only, I apprehend, the harbingers of the fatal attack by which he was appointed to be removed from this world. I fear it was not discovered in time, that the brain was the origin of his complaints; the intense and unceasing action of the mind, proving too powerful for his delicate bodily frame. In the mysterious arrangements of Providence, it would seem that whatever arrives very early at perfection, is destined to be soon cut off. Premature growth is generally followed by a premature end. The case of Urquhart is very similar to those of Durant and Kirke White; and the inimitably beautiful lines which Lord Byron applies to the latter, are, I conceive, equally applicable to my young friend. It is singular, that the passage to which I refer, was transcribed by him into a scrap book, entitled Extracts in Poetry from various Authors, only a short time before his death.

"Oh! what a noble heart was here undone,
When Science' self destroy'd her favourite son.
Yes! she too much indulged thy fond pursuit,
She sowed the seeds, but death has reaped the fruit.
'Twas thine own genius gave the fatal blow,
And helped to plant the wound that laid thee low.
So the struck eagle stretched upon the plain
No more thro' rolling clouds to soar again,
Viewed his own feather on the fatal dart,
And wing'd the shaft which quiver'd in his heart.
Keen were his pangs, but keener far to feel,
He nursed the pinion which impelled the steel:
While the same plumage that had warmed his nest,
Drank the last life-drop of his bleeding breast."

The last entry in his journal describes the commencement of the attack which terminated his earthly career, and gives a most delightful view of the state of his mind. "The ruling passion," his devoted attachment to the missionary cause, appears strong even in death. To be withdrawn from this work was the only thing which excited his regret, or extorted the expression of painful feeling; yet, even in regard to that, his mind appeared perfectly subdued.

" December, 1826.

Wednesday, 13th. An excessive languor and weakness have prevented me from studying regularly this week.—Had a long conversation with the gardener last night, whom I find to be a very shrewd man. He is quite a Scotchman. The contrast, in point of intellect, and acquired knowledge, between him and the English servants in

the family, is very striking. Yet they have travelled a good deal, and have nearly one-third of the day at their own disposal. His knowledge has been picked up in his own cottage, and those around it. He argues well on the doctrines of christianity; but, I fear, as is the case, alas! with many of our countrymen, the head is engaged more than the heart.

14th. Rose to-day at a quarter to eight.—Read half a chapter of the Greek Testament. Second chapter of Joshua in Hebrew.—Dr. Cokely called to-day, and pronounces my illness an affection of the liver. This has distressed me a good deal, as it may unfit me for the East, which I have long contemplated as the scene of my labours.—But the Lord knows what is best. If he hedge up the way, I *may* not walk in it. I *would* not, if I might. I begin a course of medicine on Friday, which I pray God may bless for the restoration of my health; that my body may be fitted for his service. If this be not his will, I know that the destruction of this body will perfect the soul, and fit it for a higher and a holier service in the heavenly temple.

‘O most delightful hour by man,
Experienced here below;
That hour which terminates his span,
His sorrow and his woe.’

14th. Not so weak this morning, but able to accomplish little in the way of study.—Prepared and attended my meeting. This is always a refreshment. I was enabled to speak with ear-

nestness and feeling on the mercy and the justice of our God.—My breathing a good deal affected to-night in walking. Though the night is wet, I feel better since I have been out.”

How delightful it is to find that to the very last, he laboured in his Master's service, and seemed to derive fresh strength from doing the will of God.

To his friend Tait he wrote the following interesting letter, on the 19th of December :

“ Tennoch Side, Dec. 19, 1826.

My dear brother,

This world, through which we are passing, is a desert, and no wonder that its dreariness should depress our spirits. Our souls too are suffering under a loathsome disease ; and if we are sensible of its loathsomeness, no wonder that we sometimes abhor our own selves. But the desert through which we travel leads to our home, and we have an all-powerful remedy for the disease that preys upon our souls. True, sin will struggle on, and the old man will fight for the mastery, as long as he may, but we shall soon leave the wilderness, and all its sufferings behind us. Strange that we should ever wish to linger ! You remember that beautiful hymn,

‘ THERE is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign ;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides,
 And never-with'ring flow'rs ;
 Death, like a narrow sea, divides
 This heav'nly land from ours.

Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
 Stand dress'd in living green :
 So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
 While Jordan roll'd between.

But tim'rous mortals start and shrink
 To cross this narrow sea,
 And linger shiv'ring on the brink,
 And fear to launch away.

Could we but climb where Moses stood,
 And view the landscape o'er ;
 Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
 Should fright us from the shore.'

I had a letter from our dear Craik, a few days before I received your last. He talks of being a missionary.—Brown and he think of Ireland. I should think them well fitted for debate, especially Henry.—I fear some one must be found to supply my place among the number of intending missionaries. You know that I have not been bent from what I thought the course of duty, by the arguments of men; but now God has spoken in a way which I think, (but I am not sure,) is decisive. I have been sickly for some weeks, and it turns out to be inflammation of the liver. I have been taking the usual course of mercurial pills for some days, and the doctor orders the side to be blistered to-morrow. I wished to write before I am quite laid up, chiefly to request you to tell me all about St. Andrew's when you return. I hoped to have visited it soon, but the Lord has

determined otherwise. Pray for me, that whether death or life be in this cup, the Lord may enable me to drink it with cheerfulness. Remember that I am literally in a land of strangers. Not a single christian friend to whisper consolation : none to whom I can pour forth the feelings of my soul. Remember me very affectionately to my dear Rentoul, in whom I feel a very peculiar interest. My old companion, William Adam, I expected to have heard from. I have others in my mind,—but I am wearied. My chief pain is in my right arm and side. Do not speak of my illness at St. Andrew's, as the report might reach home, and I have not yet written."

Whether the means resorted to, were those best suited to his case, I pretend not to say ; but while a partial recovery was effected, the disease seems still to have gone on. To his esteemed friend Craik, at Exeter, he wrote at different times, the following letter :

" Tennyson Side, December, 1826.

I have to thank you, my very dear brother, for two affectionate letters, since I wrote last. Your last was a letter of mourning, and yet it refreshed me much, and comforted me. It was but a day or two after, that I had a letter from our dear friend Tait, breathing the same strain of lamentation for worldliness, and panting after a closer walk with God. We are all one family, my brother; and

what wonder that the feelings of our hearts are *one*, while banished from our home, and wandering amid dangers; fighting with powerful enemies; and surrounded by strangers who know us not, or who know us only to hate us. But let us take courage. 'The night is far spent, the day is at hand.' Weeping may endure for a night, but joy *will* come in the morning. It is not always by light, and faith, and joy, that the Lord answers prayer for spirituality of mind. There is great truth in that hymn of Newton's,

'I ASKED the Lord that I might grow,
In faith, and love, and ev'ry grace;
Might more of his salvation know,
And seek more earnestly his face.

I hop'd that in some favour'd hour,
At once he'd answer my request;
And by his love's constraining pow'r,
Subdue my sins, and give me rest.

Instead of this, he made me feel
The hidden evils of my heart;
And let the angry pow'r's of hell
Assault my soul in ev'ry part.

Lord, why is this? I trembling cried;
Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death?
'Tis in this way, the Lord replied,
I answer pray'r for grace and faith.

These inward trials I employ,
From pride and self to set thee free;
And break thy schemes of earthly joy,
That thou may'st seek thy all in me.'

Why does God leave us *so long* in a world of sin? Why were his ancient people forty years

in travelling through the wilderness? Why are we exposed to so many temptations? It is because He will not only deliver us, but will show us the horrors of that state from which we have been delivered. And the more we know of our own vileness, shall not our praise be the louder, when we join in that glorious anthem, 'Unto Him that loved us?'

I have been a mourner too. New circumstances have presented new temptations, and the Lord has shown me my utter weakness. Once I thought my heart could not be viler than I knew it to be; but God has led me, as he did his prophet of old, from one scene of iniquity to another; and when I have thought that now I have seen all, he has opened to me some secret place within my breast, and showed me 'greater abominations still.' Nor am I sure that I know yet the depths of iniquity that are within me. How easy to pass among men as pious and holy! They compare themselves among themselves. You talk about passing the Rubicon, my dear brother. The river of death is the Rubicon. Not till we have passed it, shall we be completely freed from the world, and from its cares. I say this, because I remember feeling as I think you do. I thought, did I decidedly give up the hope of worldly honours and comforts, by deciding on the missionary life, I should no more be harrassed by the cares or allured by the vanities of earth. But it is not so. To think much of the Saviour is the only way to be made like him. I like much your plan regarding Ireland. I

do think your talents, and also those of our friend Brown, are quite of a cast for it. It has been urged much upon *me*, but you know well I am not the person for such a scene. You ask me concerning *my* plans. I have no plan at present. If Colonel M. goes to Edinburgh in April, I may probably stay a little longer with him. Some information I have got to-day, has distressed me a good deal, as it makes me fear that I shall never be fit for a warm climate. I have been drooping and sickly for some weeks. To-day, the doctor has come from Glasgow, and pronounces my illness an affection of the liver. He thinks there is no inflammation, and that a course of medicine will remove this attack. I am able to go about, though not very fit for study, and have merely a slight pain like rheumatism, in my arm and side. Rentoul, Alexander, Duff, and Trail, are in St. Andrew's. From John Adam I have not heard since I wrote you. My meeting here is confined to young people; thirteen or fourteen attend. There is no village. They come from scattered cottages. Of course, I do not preach: I talk to them. My meeting with them always refreshes and invigorates me. We go, perhaps, to Dysart at christmas. I may, perhaps, have an opportunity of visiting St. Andrew's.

This is christmas-day, and it is well for me the family have not moved. John Adam has written me lately; he is well, and goes on with his plan of preaching occasionally.

The other part of this letter was written a con-

siderable time ago; but I thought it better, since I had mentioned my illness, not to send it off, till I should see what the issue might be. Decided symptoms of inflammation soon appeared; but I am glad to say, that the Lord has blessed the means employed to remove the disease. At least, we think so at present. You must excuse me for not writing more, as I am excessively weak. I have ate very little, and have been allowed to eat nothing nourishing for some time. Add to this, that I have had a good deal of medicine, and a blister on my side, and you will not wonder that I am much reduced. I can add no more at present, but that I am ever your friend and brother in the strongest bonds."

The last letter he wrote was to his father, though the painful event that so soon followed, was then little anticipated.

" Tennock Side, December 30, 1826.

My dear father,

Christmas is past, and I am afraid you will be expecting me. This is the reason, I suppose, that my many letters have produced no answers. The family do not go to Dysart; and, in my present circumstances, that has been a great blessing to me. I may venture to tell you, now that I am better, that I have had rather a serious illness: inflammation of the liver. I have been very weak

for some time, loathing food, and oppressed with a pain in my arm and side, which I called rheumatism. Mrs. M. had the kindness to send for the doctor of the regiment, who prescribed great abstinence; the blue pill to be taken every night; and, lastly, a large blister for the right side. It has pleased God to bless these means for the removal of the disease. Of course, I am very much reduced. I have been treated with as much kindness as if I had been at home, by the house-keeper especially, who always dressed my blister, and watched me like a mother. I could not have looked for such kindness in a land of strangers. The Lord can raise up friends wherever we are; but I have had no christian to whom I could open my heart. But the Lord is here. With love to all, I am ever your affectionate son."

This letter was written when he must have been very ill, as he found it necessary to leave Colonel M's on the second or third of January, with a view to return home. He reached Glasgow; and under the hospitable roof of Mr. Ewing, met with that kind reception which had invariably been shown him, from the period of his first acquaintance with that excellent family. The following letters, addressed by Mr. and Mrs. Ewing to his father, are important, as they show the progress of the complaint, the means employed to arrest its progress, and their deep interest in the amiable sufferer.

" Glasgow, January 5, 1827.

My dear sir,

I am sorry to inform you, that your son has come to us, two days ago, rather in a poor state of health. I suppose he must have informed you, some weeks ago, of his having pain in his side, for which the regimental surgeon, (who seems a very respectable man,) ordered a course of mercury: that is now finished, but seems to have reduced our young friend to a state of great weakness. Nevertheless, the doctor says he sees no cause for alarm, as there is little or no fever in his pulse; but there is no getting him to follow advice in taking his food. This the doctor thinks will prevent him from recovering strength till he can go home, which he thinks he may do, if he gets into the coach, and takes a little warm brandy and water once or twice on the road. At Tennoch Side he became quite hypocondriac, and would eat nothing till it was out of season. We hoped he would have cheered up a little here, from conversation and nourishment; but I am sorry to say, we are disappointed. I think it my duty, therefore, to beg that, if possible, either you or his mother will come here in the beginning of the week, to endeavour to prevail with him to take nourishment, and to consult with his medical attendant what is best to be done. The doctor declares he sees nothing but the flatulency of an

empty stomach that should prevent him from eating. After all, I shall not be surprised if he propose going to morrow by the coach, for he did so last night, but not till the places had been all taken. Yet, if he persist in neglecting his food, he cannot get better. I grieve to write thus, but we are quite at a loss, for we cannot urge him; and he does not appear to be at present a good judge in his own case. I am writing without his knowledge, for when I proposed it before, he refused to let me."

"Glasgow, January 5, 1827.

My dear sir,

Since writing to you in the forenoon, Mr. Ewing (who has been obliged to go to the church meeting) thinks I should write to go by the seven o'clock coach, by which you might expect your son, to say he has never spoken of it again this day at all; and that though his pulse is down, we do not think him better, and feel at a loss how to manage him. The doctor says he should not lie in bed, but we cannot persuade him to make any exertion. The doctor says he must eat, and it is almost by compulsion, and never but when one of us in a manner insists, and holds it to him, that he takes any thing. We hope, therefore, you will come, as the doctor assures us he is quite able for the journey. We should feel it quite distressing to let him go alone, and shall feel very anxious till you

come. At the same time let me assure you, we have not concealed any circumstance from you. The doctor says his pulse is seventy-two only. He appears to me, as I have seen people, highly hysterical. We are sorry to give you all this anxiety, knowing what must be felt for such a son; but we feel it a matter of duty, and doing as we would be done by. Lieutenant-Colonel Moreland called to-day with the doctor: all that family seem to have paid him uncommon attention."

His father, it may be supposed, lost no time in proceeding to Glasgow; but before he could reach there, the most melancholy progress had been made by the fatal disease. Other medical aid had been called in, and what had been supposed to be an affection of the liver, was discovered to be an affection of the brain, where an effusion had taken place; which accounts for the comatose state he had been sinking into for some days, till at last it deprived him of all consciousness, and left no hope of recovery.

My esteemed friend Mrs. Ewing, who watched his dying bed with a mother's anxiety, has furnished me with a full and interesting account of his last days; which, together with the additional information supplied by her valued relative, Miss Cathcart, who also acted the part of a tender nurse, the reader I am sure, will be pleased to receive in their own words, although their letters contain slight-repetition in some particulars.

“ Glasgow, April 7, 1827.

After Colonel Moreland's family returned at the end of October, I think from Lord Rosslyn's, young Urquhart was only one Sabbath with us, and then said he had been a good deal troubled with his stomach. When Dr. Marshman was here, I wrote to ask him to meet him at dinner. He wrote, I might guess his disappointment at not being able to come seven miles to see him, when he had gone to London to see Dr. Morrison. The surgeon of the cavalry told me he had had a threatening of inflammation in the liver, for which he had given him Dover's powders, and blue pill, but this Mr. Urquhart had mistaken for a course of mercury. He came in here on the Wednesday preceding the one on which he died, and seemed very weak and much worn out with the drive; but told me he was now quite free of pain or complaint, except weakness and sickness when he took food. He said he had been so very ill, that though he never was insensible, he had felt what he never had before; that he could not pronounce the words he wished to say. He appeared to me highly nervous, and till his illness took a more serious turn, I had the idea which the medical attendant confirmed, that it was a hysterical case, from weakness. Both the surgeon and himself thought he was able for the journey to Perth, but he was persuaded to stop till the Friday, and take one day's

rest. No ticket was to be had providentially for Friday: for we should have attributed his illness and death to the journey, had he gone. But it is very probable, though the ticket had been got, he could not have been conveyed to the coach, as we never could get him to sit up after the Thursday night; though he told the doctor he was better, and that he had had five hours' sleep. His pulse also was better that day. That night, however, we thought him worse, and got a careful sick nurse, in whom we could confide, to be in his room all night. It was two next day when the surgeon called, and when I told him that he ate and drank what we gave him, but stared at us and did not speak, he left me abruptly, and ran up to his room. I followed instantly, being alarmed, and on examining his eyes and trying him in every way to make him speak, he requested more assistance, and told us what the other medical man confirmed, that it was a very bad case of suffusion on the brain. His head was shaved, leeches applied, and then a large blister over his head, and one on his neck. He continued quite insensible that night and next morning; and the medical gentlemen then thought it was hastening to a close. His father arrived at eleven, but John did not know him when first he came. When Mr. Ewing came in from the forenoon service, it struck me there was more intelligence in Mr. Urquhart's face, and I begged of him to come up and speak to him, and pray; which to gratify me he did, for he had no hope himself, thinking I fancied I saw

what I so eagerly wished. Mr. Ewing spoke a few sentences on the hope of the gospel as suited to one in the near prospect of death, and the glory, honour, and immortality that were treasured up in heaven for those whose trust was in the Lord Jesus Christ; and then prayed for him as seemingly near death. You may believe I watched narrowly the effect of this, and observed him exceedingly agitated and affected. When Mr. Ewing finished, his hands, which he had not moved for many hours, I saw him endeavouring to disengage from the bed clothes, and therefore I raised the clothes; when he stretched out his hand and pressed Mr. Ewing's, and smiled. Mr. Ewing said, 'Do you know me?' When he said, 'Do not I know Mr. Ewing?' I went for his father, and he knew him and named him. After this he lay above an hour quite motionless, but apparently to me in meditation and prayer. At the end of that period he observed and named me, and said, 'My mind is quite calm now.' I said, 'I trust your hope is fixed on the Rock of Ages.' He three times replied in a most impressive way, 'Yes; my hope is *fixed* on the *Rock of Ages*.' I went on speaking for a little in the same way, saying, 'you will find it a sure foundation; that Christ is able to save *to the uttermost*; that he is *a very present help* in trouble; that the hope set before us in his gospel, is a *glorious hope*.' His weakness seemed not to permit him to say much, but he repeated the emphatic words in each passage, in a tone of exultation I think I hear yet,

and with a countenance beaming with delight. Knowing the state of insensibility from which he seemed newly recovered, I felt a kind of half-fear at his only repeating what I said, and stopped; when he went on himself with two or three passages, importing the full triumph of faith. But now I remember only one; it was, '*I know that nothing shall separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus my Lord;*' but it is impossible to convey an idea of the tone and manner. It made all in the room weep abundantly, except myself; I was thankful I could command my feelings, on his account. We were not aware till afterwards, that his mind had, during the illness before christmas, been extremely depressed; and that it was on expressing that to his young friend, that the beautiful lines were sent that were something like prophetic of his state before death. I send you Jane's letter to Miss Young, which will supply any thing else he said while able to speak. From that time till within an hour or two of his death, and long after he ceased to speak or see, whenever he heard Mr. Ewing's voice, he ceased his moaning or laborious breathing, to listen; or when any of us repeated a passage of Scripture.

When the medical men returned at four on Sabbath, expecting to find him very near a close of his sufferings, they were very much astonished at the change in his sight, and restored understanding and speech; and though they would not say they could give us hope, they said symptoms

were better, and that he must not be excited by speaking, but kept very quiet. This slight hope was kept up all Monday, and we went to bed that night (leaving two to watch him) with stronger hope; but at four in the morning his attendants came for me on his being greatly worse. At four in the afternoon of Tuesday, he was increasingly worse, and then death was so evidently near, that both Miss C. and I sat up till after four, when I was compelled to lay down for two hours, from worn out strength. When I returned at six he was evidently weaker. His last hour was while we were at breakfast. Miss C. would not leave the room, and I just entered it, to see the last breath drawn by the dear young saint.

You will remember first introducing him to my husband, and I have often thought we owed to the fondness that interview excited in both to each other, the honour God granted us of having him to minister to in his illness and death. He came first to this house when he arrived in Glasgow, and we secured by that what any other family would have done, that he should always come to us; and so eager were we to have him, that when Mr. and Mrs. Matheson and children were with us, after fixing we should ask a bed for him from our kind neighbour Mrs. Smith, we put up a bed for him in the little dressing-room. I send you the letters of Dr. Chalmers, Mrs. Moreland, &c. and you know the universal testimony to his worth, and talents, and piety, and engaging manners. If there is any thing farther you wish on

this subject that I can supply, it will give me satisfaction. I cannot but hope the Lord will bless the memoir to many souls. Surely such a bright star has not, in the short space it was seen, reflected all it was lighted up for, of the glory of God."

The following is Miss Cathcart's letter, to which Mrs. Ewing refers :

—"We have witnessed a very painful and solemn scene in the death of that dear child of God. Mr. and Mrs. Ewing felt it an honour to administer to his comfort; and it was a privilege to myself attending him, which I trust will benefit my own soul. Much mercy was mixed with the trying dispensation. It was most providential a ticket in the Perth coach could not be had; and when Mr. Urquhart seemed to regret it, Mr. Ewing said there was a providence in all these things; in which he directly acquiesced. In all his wanderings, not a murmur or complaint was heard. When he was collected and prayed aloud, it was most delightful to hear him pouring out his heart to God in such humble and scriptural language. I wish the self-righteous had heard him declare that if he got what he deserved, he would be in hell fire, and that he had nothing to plead but the mercy of God through the righteousness of Christ. At times, when unable to speak, he appeared sensible by the placid smile on his countenance. When Mr. Ewing was praying, and

when he mentioned any of the cheering promises in the gospel to believers, Urquhart would say, 'Yes! yes!' with great emphasis. At one time when his poor father asked the state of his mind, he replied, 'in perfect peace, stayed on God,' and repeated a second time, 'stayed on God.' One morning he asked me if his father was up, I asked him if he wished to see him, he replied, 'Yes.' When he came he said, 'John, do you know your father?' to which he replied, 'I know my father;'—and then Mr. Urquhart said, 'I hope you know your Father in heaven, who, I trust, has prepared a mansion for you.' I think the sweet youth said, 'I believe there is.' At another time when nobody was in his sight, I heard him say, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.' When alone in his room, but not that he could see me, he said, 'Who is there?' I went to his bed-side, and said 'Miss Cathcart,' thinking he might not know my voice, he replied, 'When did you come here?' I said, 'I have been with you all the time you have been ill here, and I feed you with what you eat;'—he said, 'I am happy to have my friends with me.' I replied, 'you have a friend who sticketh closer than a brother;' 'Yes,' he added, 'Jesus Christ is a Friend who sticketh closer than a brother; but all the Lord's people are interested in each other.' At times when we did not think he knew us, he showed he did by naming us, or holding out his hand; and expressed anxiety for Mrs. Ewing fatiguing herself, by different times saying, 'My beloved Mrs. Ewing, lie down beside me.' The most

heart-rending scene I ever witnessed, was on the Tuesday night before his death. Mr. Urquhart came into the room, and at the bed-side gave up in prayer his son to the Lord, when all the yearning of the afflicted parent was expressed, and the submission of the christian exemplified.—Some present thought John sensible and agitated, but I was so much distressed myself, that I did not observe. The poor father is much to be pitied, who says he has lost his child, son, friend, counsellor, and comforter. My friend Mrs. Smith's husband, told me he had never been at a funeral where such a feeling of regret was shown. The sick-nurse and the servants paid him the greatest attention, and many tears they shed for him. He told us how very kind Colonel and Mrs. Moreland had been to him; also that the house-keeper had been quite like a mother to him during his illness."

His death took place on Wednesday, the 10th of January, 1827, when he was only eighteen years and six months old. His career was short, but interesting, useful, and glorious. However mysterious it may appear to us, it was doubtless well with him; and Christ who was gain to him in life, proved to him gain in death also. His course was calm, holy, and consistent; its termination was peaceful and happy. It was improved by Mr. Ewing, on the following Lord's-day, from Psalm cxvi. 15. "Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints." It produced,

among many others, the following letter from Dr. Chalmers, to his father :

“ St. Andrew's, January 15, 1827.

My dear sir,

I cannot refrain from offering my condolence on the late melancholy bereavement wherewith it hath pleased a mysterious Providence to visit you. I received the intelligence by a letter from Mr. Ewing, which I circulated among the numerous friends and acquaintance of your son in this place. His death has created a great sensation among his fellow-students, by whom he was held in the highest reverence and regard: which feelings were shared also by the professors; several of whom I heard expressing their utmost regret, and affirming him to be the most distinguished, in point of ability and good conduct, of all the disciples who ever attended them. I yesterday communicated the afflicting intelligence to the children of my Sabbath school. They both knew and loved him:—he having taken charge of their religious instruction, for one session of college. They were evidently affected by the melancholy news.

To your christian mind, there is a far richer consolation than that which is afforded by the report or the remembrance of his first-rate talents: talents which would have raised him to the highest summits of learning and philosophy; had he not wished to consecrate them all to the service of his

Redeemer. Your best and most precious comforts under this heavy dispensation, are to be drawn from the consideration of that faith by which he was actuated, of that grace which animated his heart and adorned his history, of that glory for the enjoyment of which he was so ripened and prepared; in a word, of that promise, that they who sleep in Jesus, shall meet again, in that country where sorrow and separation are alike unknown.

Few parents are called to sustain so severe a loss as you have now done; but with few, very few indeed, is the loss tempered by such precious alleviations.

I am, my dear sir,

Yours, with sympathy and regard,

THOMAS CHALMERS."

The following lines, addressed to him by one of his correspondents, were, indeed, sadly prophetic of the event which so soon after took place. They are simple, and beautifully descriptive of the feelings, not of the writer only, but of his friend, and strikingly applicable to his last closing scene.

2 TIMOTHY, iv. 6.

"THE Christian Pilgrim bid depart,—

Departs without a sigh,

Fear can no longer chill his heart,

Or sorrow dim his eye.

In Heaven's own garments see him stand

On death's much dreaded shore,

He gazes on the promis'd land,

And seems already o'er.

We saw him oft betray a feat
As near this flood he drew;
But now a willing pilgrim here,
He kindles at the view.

A ray hath broke from Canaan's land,
Across that sullen flood:
It bids him quit its mortal strand,
And onward march to God.

He marches on, for now his eye
Hath lost life's lurid ray,
As suns which quit a clouded sky
To shine in brighter day.

O could we catch one moment's view,
Of what he now must know,
Sorrow would fill our spirits too,
To linger thus below!"

I feel now to have finished my allotted task; and that it is better to draw this narrative to a close than by attempting any thing in the shape of character, to deprive the reader of the impression which the facts themselves, and the concluding scene, are fitted to produce. But I cannot abstain from a few observations.

To me the undertaking has been of a very painful, and at the same time, pleasing nature; including as much of that mixed feeling which the poet calls "the joy of grief," as any thing which ever engaged my attention. How much I loved him I have not ventured, nor will I now venture, to express. That he was entitled to it all, and to more than all, I am well convinced. If I felt towards him all the affection of a father, he repaid it with all the tenderness and confidence of a son. I feel as if the world had become, by his death,

less an object of interest to me than it was; but I trust I have also been made to feel, in common with many of his devoted friends, that the attractions of a better world have been multiplied and strengthened by his removal thither.

Afraid to trust myself in describing his character and attainments, lest my personal feelings might be supposed to have too powerfully influenced my judgment, I have interspersed the opinions and testimonies of others with my own sentiments and the papers of the deceased. The testimonies are not nearly exhausted; nor is it possible for me to convey an adequate idea of the extent to which he was beloved and admired by all who knew him. The sweetness of his natural disposition, and the bewitching simplicity of his manners; the soundness of his judgment, and the fertility of his imagination; the ardour of his pursuit of science and literature with the variety and accuracy of his attainments; rendered him one of the most extraordinary individuals of his years. When with these are combined his extensive knowledge of the mystery of redemption, and of the sacred volume; his simplicity of aim, with the fixed and intense ardour of his zeal; his love to souls, which made him ready to lay his learning, his talents, his genius, and his life, at the foot of the cross, and to abandon the country where he might have shone and triumphed, for scenes of foreign labour and suffering; the eminent spirituality of his mind, the consistency of deportment, and the maturity of character and experience, at which he arrived; I

need scarcely add, he presented an uncommonly rare assemblage of natural, acquired, and christian excellences. Of the truth of this representation, every reader has now been furnished with means of judging for himself; and I safely leave with him the conclusions to be drawn.

His christian character is that on which the mind now reposes with the greatest satisfaction. As it regards his other attainments, "literature has failed, tongues have ceased," and "knowledge has vanished away." What he was as a linguist, and a mathematician, might have been of importance had he continued to live; what he was as a believer in Jesus is the only thing of importance to him now. He has attained to the perfect state, and experiences a high degree of that felicity which he could so well describe, and so earnestly panted to enjoy.

"If I might be allowed," says a correspondent, to whom one of his last letters was addressed, "to say any thing, from the acquaintance I had with him; and there was scarce a day last winter, in which I was not sometime with him; I would say of him, as his biographer said of Henry Martyn, 'a more perfect christian character I never knew.' Like Martyn, indeed, it might be said of him, 'his symmetry in the christian stature, was as surprising as its height.' I never saw a finer example of 'a living sacrifice;' he seemed, indeed, to reckon himself not his own, but bought with a price, and, as such, he was entirely devoted to the

glory of God: nor did he care what perils or sufferings he underwent, if so be that that object might be promoted. In this cause even death did not appal him. I remember well, when he thought of China as a scene of missionary labour; and when he was told that the government positively prohibited the missionaries from preaching in that country; he said he should conceive it his duty to transgress this prohibition; and, if his death was the consequence, let it be so; the blood of a missionary sometimes advanced the cause, as much as his long life and labours. Think of such devotion in a youth of eighteen, whose rare talents, and unquestioned christian character, gave him the fairest prospects of usefulness and comfort in his native land, while they would have infallibly secured to him the admiration and affection of all who knew him. He was eminently spiritually-minded. No one ever felt more the burden of indwelling sin, and never did captive exile long more earnestly to be loosed, than he did, for deliverance from its taint and its power. Hence he dwelt much on the holiness of heaven. It was the theme, he has often assured me, of his refreshing meditation, when his mind was depressed, as he looked forward to the perils, and sufferings, and privations, which he might be called to undergo in this world. I remember one day, while I was with him, his telling me, that while reading the Scriptures that morning, on this his favourite subject, his mind was so wrapt in contemplation, that he forgot, for the moment, where he was; till, when his consciousness re-

turned, on looking first into his own heart, polluted with sin, and then into the world around him, 'lying in the wicked one,' he burst into tears. He was possessed of much tenderness of spiritual feeling, and was most vividly impressed by every Scripture truth which he received. In one respect, much of the same mind dwelt in him, which was in Christ Jesus: he felt much for his brethren of mankind, and his heart bled for the condition of those who were not in Christ; yet was he possessed with the keenest indignation at iniquity, and every exhibition of it provoked his holy abhorrence. His was a character most exquisitely formed for christian friendship. Possessed naturally of the most amiable dispositions, they were rendered still more so by the Spirit of God which dwelt in him. In his friends, he encouraged the most unbounded confidence; and his was a heart, into which, when distressed or disgusted, they could unbosom every thought which grieved them, and find a balsam for every wound. I speak not this at random. I know it from sweet experience."

I cannot conclude the memoir of my beloved friend, without once more soliciting attention to the prominent feature of his religion and of his religious character; his devoted zeal to the glory of Christ, in combination with the salvation of men. It is obvious, that to diffuse the knowledge of the

gospel in the world, constituted his life and happiness. The subject pervades all his papers, runs through all his letters, and at length entirely engrossed his thoughts. In his case, it was nothing assumed or professed, but something growing out of the very principles of his faith, and constituting the chief element in his religion. He had no conception of christianity, apart from the love of extending it. That which constituted its glory in his eyes, was its perfect adaptation to the wants and wretchedness of men; and the more he knew the evil, and the better he became acquainted with the remedy, the more powerfully he felt the obligation to preach the gospel to every creature.

His devotedness, therefore, was not so much an act of obedience to a law, as the operation of the great principle of the new economy, and of the new nature—LOVE:—grateful love to God, and compassionate love to men. Hence the calmness and rationality, as well as the ardour of his mind, in reference to this great subject. He did not regard himself as making an unreasonable sacrifice, though to certain consequences he was acutely sensible; or as called to a work of a peculiar and unprecedented nature; but merely as discharging a common obligation, and engaging in a service which ought, in one way or other, to be attended to by every disciple of Jesus. He felt that much had been forgiven him, he therefore loved much. As he grew in spirituality of mind, he grew not only in deadness to the world, but indifference to those literary and scientific pursuits in which he was so

well qualified to excel; and, in his admiration of the superior excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. He despised them, not because he was ignorant of them, or because they were beyond his reach; but after he had subdued the difficulties of the ascent, and had their loftiest summits full in view. Even then, he did not disregard them as worthless, but as less worthy than another and a higher object. While the laurels which he had so honourably won, were yet fresh and unwithered on his brow, he laid them at the foot of the cross, and with high christian magnanimity declared, "that what things were gain to him, those he counted loss for Christ."

When I speak of his indifference to the pursuits of philosophy, I mean not to say that he neglected the cultivation of his mind, or that he turned aside from any of the paths of learning and science which he was capable of exploring. I only mean to say that he pursued them no longer for their own sake, for the gratification which they afforded, or for the earthly rewards which they might have secured. They became subordinate, in his mind, to an ulterior object. In as far as they might fit him for more eminent usefulness, he considered them important, and studied them with diligence and unconquerable determination.

To his ardour of spirit in the acquisition of qualifications which he felt to be necessary for the service of Christ, and the intense working of his mind in regard to that service itself, I have no doubt he fell a sacrifice. Many an individual has

been a martyr for Christ, who has not expired on a gibbet, or suffered at the stake. Zeal for the glory and the house of God is a consuming principle. It burnt up the Saviour himself, and it has brought to a speedy termination the career of many a disciple. Such, I feel assured, was the case of John Urquhart. His feelings became morbid; but this was the result of weakness of body, rather than of any improper or undue exercise of the mind. The sensibilities of his nature were indeed refined and excited by his christian principles, till they became too powerful for the bodily structure on which they operated. But that reflects no discredit on christianity. It only illustrates the weakness of man, and the disproportion of his powers to the magnitude and the lofty enterprise of the gospel. Granting that it killed the individual, it only follows, that the event is mysterious, not that a loss has been sustained. That the reward of the sufferer is secured, we have the best reason for believing; and that gain, rather than damage, may arise to the cause of the Saviour, eternity will enable us to discover.

Did the present state terminate the being and the bliss of man, we might well be discouraged by the occurrence of such early deaths, from cultivating our intellectual faculties. The uncertainty of enjoying them for any length of time, is so great, that the labour of the cultivation might seem disproportioned to the result. But if all intellectual and moral worth shall find place and scope in the eternal world, the case is very different. No men-

tal attainment can be lost. The language, and the literature, and the science of heaven may be different from all that we have known on earth; but the capacity which grasped the word and the works of God in this world, and which was improved by the influence which is from above, will operate in proportion to its strength and its spirituality on the things of eternity.

memoirs If the reader is young and enterprising; if he possesses talents, and if those talents are cultivated; let me submit to such an individual the consideration of the example and the lesson recorded in these ~~volumes~~. I mean the example and the lesson of high devotedness. For what purpose has God endowed you with his gifts, and blessed you with his grace? What is your proposed field of glory or enterprise? Have you devoted your life and your talents to Christ, or to the business and the ambition of this world? Are you a christian? Then is there one object placed before you, and one course marked out for you to follow, "None of us liveth to himself." Every christian is Christ's property and Christ's servant. The service of Christ, the glory of Christ, and the salvation of the world, are as much the interest of the weakest believer, as they were that of the Apostle Paul. Every christian owes his all to the Redeemer; and Paul could owe no more. We may not be honoured to preach the gospel, or to die for the gospel; but to live and die to Christ is the honour and privilege of all his saints. The life which is consecrated to his service, and the talents which

are devoted to his glory, will be found the happiest, and in the end, the most productive. It may be short, it may be long, as the will of God shall determine: that is not our concern, and ought not to cause our anxiety. But it ought to be our anxious and unceasing desire, that, "whether we live, we may live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we may die unto the Lord: that, whether we live or die, we may be the Lord's." We are constantly reminded by the events which occur, of the truth of the Scriptures: "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away." While these things humble us, and remind us of our sinfulness and our mortality, we still have hope. "We are cast down, but not destroyed; we are sorrowful, yet always rejoicing:" for, "while the world passeth away, and the lust thereof;" we know that "he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

APPENDIX.

The following Poetical Tributes to the Memory of John Urquhart, are the productions of two of his fellow-students. I give them a place here, not so much on account of their poetical merits, as on account of the testimony which they bear to his religious and intellectual character. I do it also from regard to the feelings of the respectable young men who so tenderly deplore the loss of their departed friend. The first was printed, but not published, by its author; the second was sent me in manuscript, and now (1827) appears for the first time.

TO
The Memory
 OF
JOHN URQUHART,

WHO DIED THE 10TH OF JANUARY, 1827.

"A BLOSSOM, NO SOONER BLOWN THAN BLASTED."

OH Death ! oh Death ! thou minister of woe !
 Thou first-born child of sin ! whose cold embrace,
 Reduceth man to ashes ! Thou hast not been slow,
 To grasp this sainted darling of our race,
 And shed thy breath of grief o'er many a face.—
 How thou dost sport with genius and with youth !
 He who was rob'd by learning, crown'd by grace,
 And shone so brightly in the rays of truth,
 Is laid in dust !—Oh Death ! Thou hast but little ruth.

We weep and wish, tho' he hath gone to Heaven,
 That this lov'd boy had tarried longer here ;
 This gentle, blessed youth, to whom were given
 Those precious views of heavenly grace, that cheer
 The soul who loves,—but cannot cease to fear.
 We are bereft !—Yet will we not despair,
 But onward, heavenward, look in our career ;
 For earth now seems more desolate and bare,
 And Heaven has got new charms to us, since he is
 there.

Devoted Youth ! He thought that Ocean's wave
 Should bear him to the glowing Indian shore,
 Where crowd the teeming millions to the grave,
 In heathen darkness. And his heart he tore,
 From many bosoms.—But these pangs are o'er.—
 Is Death a tyrant, in the eastern world,
 Like man ?—We told him this.—Now we deplore,
 That, ere he had his banners there unfurl'd,
 The dust and bones of the dull grave were o'er him
 hurl'd.

This is mysterious ;—so is every thing.
 The meek are blessed,—but unblest the proud,
 Who, like a well-chained eagle on the wing,
 Struggle in vain to soar, and pierce the cloud,
 In which all fate is wrapt,—as in a shroud.
 To him,—the grave was the short way to bliss.
 To us,—perchance, its voice hath sounded loud,
 Calling us on to higher sacredness,
 If earth may vanish thus, 'tis time heavenward to
 press.

The City mourns, wherein his robes were wove,
 St. Andrew's,—who, tho' jealous o'er the dead,
 That sleep amid her ruins,—yet hath love,
 And eke a mother's heart, that now has bled,
 Would, that above her URQUHART's sainted head,
 Her sons, the Spartan's epitaph might trace !
 But let that pass.—And, oh ! ne'er be it said,
 That wayward youths, who heed no good nor grace,
 Should bear her laurels there, and shame another
 place.

In Memory

or

JOHN URQUHART.

THE righteous die, and few bewail their loss,
 No general grief pours forth its tears for them.
 The shrinking, sainted children of the cross,
 Seek not the fading honour of a name.
 And yet, if worth may fairly draw on fame,
 For none a louder anthem should we raise,
 Than those who are extolled in angel notes and lays

And who could bear to see thy early flight,
 And hear no farewell sound of weeping praise ;
 Although thyself wouldst not have thought it right,
 To tell thy deeds in laudatory phrase :
 Yet doth thy memory our souls so raise
 To better thoughts and things, that it were wrong
 To let thee go unsung 'midst the forgotten throng.

Like some sweet vision in the good man's dream,
 Thy memory comes arrayed in robes of white ;
 With gifts and graces these embroidered seem,
 Sparkling with gems which beam ethereal light,
 Without one spot or rent to grieve the sight.
 Ten thousand faithful works their perfume lend,
 And through the astonished air, Eden's first fragrance
 send.

There modesty's incurious glance is seen,
 And gentlest meekness opes her lips of love ;
 And fruits of reason nestling 'mid the green
 Young leaves of fancy, have a chaplet wove,
 Which decks the alabaster brow above.
 Faith, hope, and love around the vision play,
 And tell it fit to shine in uncreated day.

The loveliness was thine of genuine worth ;
 The flowers of talent in its spring were thine ;
 Genius called forth a garland at thy birth,
 And grace soon wreathed it round a crown divine.
 Oh ! fairest sight, on which this sun can shine,
 The vestal soul to seraph joys alive,
 And graced by all the charms genius and youth can
 give.

Why, then, should we repine at Heaven's demand,
 Which hath but called thee to thy proper sphere :
 By special license thou at first didst land
 On earth's unhappy confines, for not here
 Could'st thou have found a healthful atmosphere.
 Thy purer spirit loath'd the gross restraint,
 And burst from stifling sin, a young, but finish'd
 saint.

And yet the officious tear will sometimes rise,
 When we remember thou hadst given up all,
 That heathen lands might heavenward lift their
 eyes ;
 And didst await the dread, yet welcome call,
 That should have hasten'd the Seducer's fall,
 In that vast empire, whose unnumbered swarms,
 Still sleep the sleep of death, lull'd fast by idol charms.

Sure, ne'er did lovelier victim stand prepar'd
 To part with life, home, friends, and all that's dear ;
 With eye intent on the divine reward,
 A kingdom's "life from death," thou didst not fear
 Thy God could fail to guard thy sure career ;
 Man's thousand hind'rances appear'd undone,
 Before the conquering power of God's incarnate Son.

But what can purest, warmest zeal, avail,
 When the divine command hath wing'd its flight ;
 "Tarry no longer in this tearful vale,
 But haste thee to the choirs which walk in white ;"
 We would not, dare not, tho' sin's cursed blight
 Its millions kills, wish to impede thy rise,
 Thou wert too fully ripe to thrive beneath the skies,

And thus it ever is,—the early flower
 Will not impart its scent to autumn's gale ;
 Nor even wait to deck the summer bower :
 But ere its infant buds can well unveil,
 Some envious tempest sweeps it from the dale ;
 And human excellence, when premature,
 Soon leaves this faded life for a reversion sure.

Cease then, a father's sighs, and mother's tears ;
 You must have known an early death was nigh ;
 Even from the period of his childish years,
 When his new loos'd, unpractis'd tongue did try
 To utter thoughts, too old* for infancy,
 It could not be, that God's discerning care,
 Should such a son as this, from his own bosom spare.

* The author had in his mind's eye here, a circumstance which he well remembered. He was walking on a beautiful starry night with the deceased, who told him, that when he was a child, he used to think that heaven was a place full of light, and that the stars were so many holes through which it came to the earth.

And ye, his youthful friends, whose weeping praise,
 Speaks a regret you ne'er can know again;
 To his bright dwelling place your wishes raise.
 Let not his prayers, life, death, be all in vain,
 If aught his Hallelujah's could restrain,
 T'would be the thought that his untimely death,
 Had failed to make you long for more devoted faith.

What trophies on his tomb-stone shall we place?
 Shall genius hang her garland o'er his head?
 Or learning's reverend book unvail its face?
 Or stern, yet weak, morality instead,
 Grave her proud emblems o'er the lowly dead?
 Oh, no, for other tombs such toys we'll leave,
 And but one hopeful sigh, o'er the departed heave.

END OF VOL. II.



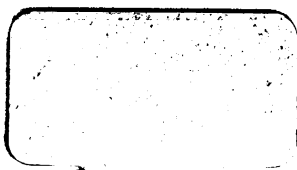








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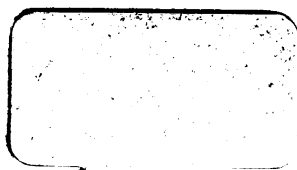


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